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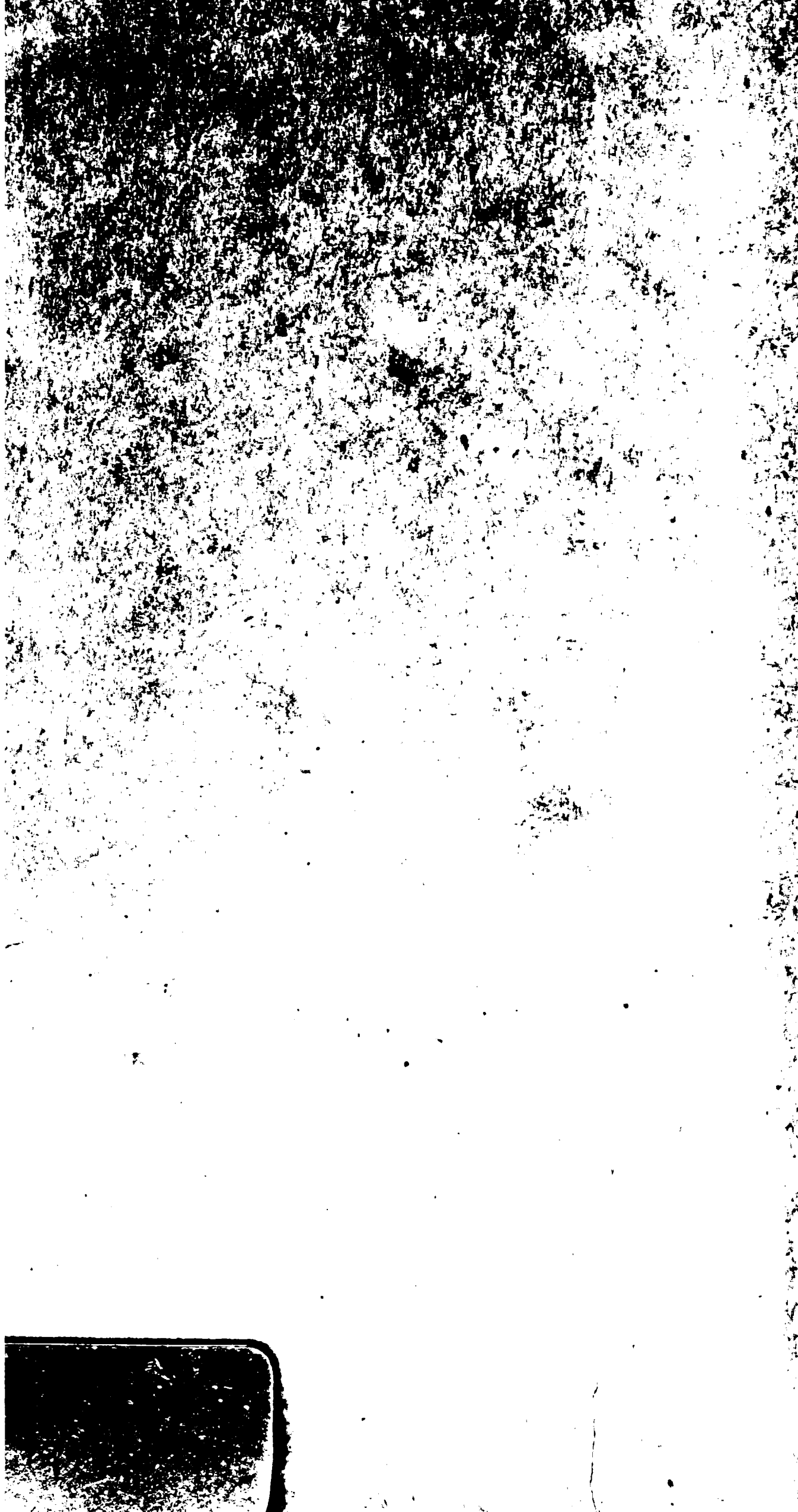
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SPECIMENS
OF
ENGLISH PROSE-WRITERS.

SPECIMENS
OF
ENGLISH PROSE - WRITERS.

**FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE CLOSE OF
THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY,**

WITH
SKETCHES BIOGRAPHICAL AND LITERARY;

INCLUDING
AN ACCOUNT OF BOOKS,
AS WELL AS OF THEIR AUTHORS:

WITH
OCCASIONAL CRITICISMS, &c.

BY GEORGE BURNETT,

Late of Baliol College, Oxford.

Second Edition.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

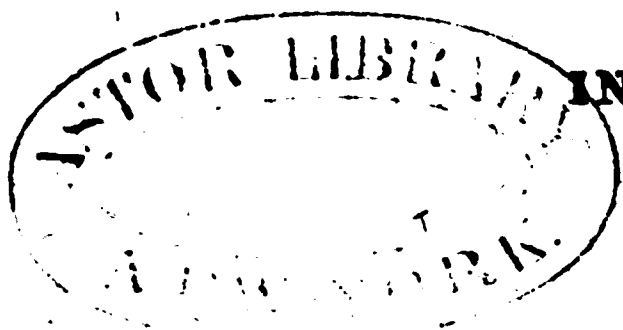
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PREFACE.

THE idea of this compilation was suggested by Mr. Ellis's "Specimens of Early English Poets;" of which work it may be considered in some sort as forming the counterpart. My first intention was, to exhibit simply a chronological series of selections, as specimens of the progress of English prose style, without any other comment or observation than short biographical notices of the several authors, like those in the two last volumes of Mr. Ellis. But I soon reflected, that a bare list of unconnected, often of incomplete passages, would

probably afford but a meagre entertainment to the general reader; and that a useful principle of connection may be communicated by the interspersion of such remarks and historical matter, as should tend to elucidate the progress of our national literature, as well as language. Conceiving, too, that a work of this nature is likely to fall into the hands of young and uninformed readers, I have thought it of consequence to mark distinctly the great literary æras, with a view less to give information, than to stimulate enquiry. For various literary sketches and remarks (particularly, however, in the first volume,) I have been indebted to Warton's *History of English Poetry*; in a slight degree also to Mr. Godwin's *Life of Chaucer*. My general source for the lives has been the *Biographia Britannica*. Other sources are referred to, where it could be of any utility. It were idle to make a display of authorities in a work which has no pretensions to originality even of compilement. In-

deed, I consider myself as having done little more, than collected into a convenient form and arrangement, some information (I hope entertaining and useful) before incommodiously dispersed either in scarce or cumbrous volumes.

From the period of lord Bacon, both the language and people's habits of thought, become settled in a regular order of progression; and my observations of every kind are less frequent, because less necessary. A few introductory remarks only to the several reigns have sufficed, with the customary extension of the biographies, where the subjects seemed to require it; in general, the lives consist merely of a few dates.

It appeared to me also, that it would add greatly to the usefulness, and particularly to the convenience of the work, as a book of occasional reference, if I inserted lists of the different productions of the several authors. This has, therefore, been commonly done, with a brief account of principal works. Such

lists are not without their use, in the view simply of indicating the subjects which have interested the curiosity, and exercised the talents of different ages.

Moreover, the work comprises an account of, and extracts from, most of the ancient chroniclers and historians who have written in English.

The principles by which I have generally been influenced in my choice of extracts have been, to select passages curious or remarkable, as relating directly to the subject of language; as possessing intrinsic value as examples of style; as characteristic of the author; or as distinctive of the manners and sentiments of the age. In writers of continuous reasoning, which abound from the reign of Elizabeth, my aim has commonly been to present as clear a view of the general principles of the author, as my limits would admit, and as could be done *in the words of the author himself*; and which has been attempted, not simply by the

selection of those parts where they are distinctly stated, but by frequently conjoining passages, distant in place, though connected in sense. The extracts, therefore, together with the interspersed remarks, and the occasional sketches of literary history, will obviously contribute to elucidate the progress of manners, of opinion, and of general refinement.

I need scarcely suggest the peculiar advantages of thus exhibiting a view of writers in chronological order. It assists the memory, by favouring the most natural and appropriate associations; the celebrated cotemporaries are represented, as they ought, in groups: and if the questions arise, Who were the literary worthies that adorned any given reign? and What were their respective claims to distinction?—we have only to turn to that reign in the present work, to receive the required information. Even the incidental mention in the biographies of facts in civil history, will

tend to awaken the curiosity to become better acquainted with the transactions of which they are links; and thus the reader will be insensibly led to the civil, as well as the literary history of the period.

Still, however, I do not present these volumes as a work of much research. I have examined scarcely at all into MS. stores; and have been more solicitous to give an account of authors who possess a permanent value, than of productions valuable only as *curious* relics of past literary ages. I considered also, that within the limits I thought proper to assign myself, the number of names might have been too great, as well as too little: for, as prose has not the advantage of poetry, (in which a sonnet is as complete as an epic poem) the extracts in the former case could rarely, from their brevity, have possessed a distinct and independent value. It seemed therefore more rational to allot to great and valuable authors a tolerable space, that the specimens exhibited from

them might give the reader no incompetent idea of their respective excellencies, or peculiarities.

To prevent any repellent effect to the general reader, it was thought advisable to adopt the modern orthography. The ancient spelling, indeed, was quite unsettled, and in some degree arbitrary; the same author often writing the same word in two or three different ways. To many readers, this might have been a source of obscurity. It was hence, perhaps, of less consequence to retain it; but it once occurred to me to print a few sentences, or a short passage, in each author, in the ancient manner, and the series of specimens might then have been considered as historically correct; at least sufficiently so for every useful purpose. This may hereafter be done, should the work be so fortunate as to be sanctioned by the public approbation.

Some of the extracts towards the latter end of the first volume may possibly appear to

contain as many, and even more obsolete words, than several of those of an earlier date. This has arisen, I apprehend, from the early multiplication of copies of books; and from the alterations made by successive transcribers before the invention of printing; and by different editors since.

It might have given an air of greater completeness to this work, had it been preceded by an essay on the early formation of our language from the Anglo Saxon and Norman French; but having been anticipated in the plan by Mr. Ellis, it could have been regarded only as superfluous repetition of what he and his predecessors Johnson and Tyrwhit had done before. For the same reason also, I have been more sparing of observations strictly philological, than otherwise I might have been. The matter interspersed is, for the most part, historical or bibliological; calculated to give some little information to those who have not made our early literature the

subject of their particular study. To have accumulated critical remarks would have been an officious obtrusion upon the judgment of the reader.

In tumbling over such a multitude of books, and upon subjects almost equally multitudinous, I can by no means presume to hope, that I have always lighted upon passages, the very best that might have been chosen. In respect of the principal authors, I trust, there will be little room for complaint; yet there will still remain many flowers of beauty and fragrance, which would have embellished the garland here presented, and on which my discursive eye has not fallen. Should the opportunity be allowed me I should gratefully cull any which might be pointed out to me by some more attentive or tasteful wanderer in the fields of literature. Besides, it can scarcely be deemed unreasonable for me to alledge, that the toil of transcription (though in this respect I have had much assistance) has

been yet considerable ; not to mention the unavoidable waste of labour, arising from alteration of taste in selection, and from the difficulty of proportioning the extracts. Had I thoroughly foreseen the tediousness occasioned by these causes, I should almost have been deterred from the undertaking.

In a work of this kind, fame is entirely out of the question ; if the public, therefore, should think proper to call for a second edition, I should very readily adopt any suggestion, either from friend or stranger, which I thought could add either to its utility or entertainment,

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SPECIMENS, &c.

Edward III.

VOL. I.

B

SPECIMENS, &c.

EDWARD III.

MANDEVILLE.

THE first prose writer in the English language, which occurs in our literary annals, is the ancient and renowned traveller, sir John Mandeville. He was born at St. Albans about the beginning of 1300. He received a liberal education, and applied himself to the study of medicine, which he probably practised for some time. But being urged by an unconquerable curiosity to see foreign countries, he departed from England in 1332, and continued abroad for four and thirty years; during which time his person and appearance had

so changed, that, on his return, his friends, who had supposed him dead, did not know him. In the course of his travels, he acquired the knowledge of almost all languages, and visited all the chief countries of the known earth; among which may be enumerated Greece, Dalmatia, Armenia the greater and less, Egypt, Arabia, Chaldæa, Syria, Media, Mesopotamia, Persia, Scythia, Cathay or China, &c. The habit of roving, however, was still too powerful to suffer him to remain quietly at home. He quitted his own country a second time, and finally died at Liege in the Low Countries, in 1372.

He wrote an "Itinerary," or an account of his travels, in English, French, and Latin. We learn from Vossius, that it existed also in Italian, Belgic, and German. The inscription, too, on his monument at Liege, is preserved by the same author, and is as follows: *Hic jacet vir nobilis, dominus Johannes de Mandeville, alias dictus ad Barbam, dominus de Campoli, natus in Anglia, medicinæ professor, devotissimus orator, et bonorum suorum largissimus pauperibus erogator, qui, toto quasi orbe lustrato, Leodii vitæ suæ diem clausit, A. D. 1372, Nov. 17.*

His travels abound in miracles and wonderful stories; and accordingly, the title of one of the Latin manuscripts is *Itinerarium Johannis Maundeville, de Mirabilibus Mundi*. Ambitious of saying whatever had been, as well as whatever could be said of the places he visited, he has taken monsters from Pliny, miracles from legends, and marvellous stories from romances. In this, indeed, he only furnishes an instance of the taste of the age in which he lived; and imitates the example of the early historians of all nations, and among his own countrymen, his predecessors Gildas, Nennius, Geoffrey of Monmouth, and even the venerable Bede, in blending fabulous narratives with the relations of real history. It should be observed, however, that his book is supposed to have been interpolated by the monks; a supposition that will appear highly probable from the following extracts. Still, when he relates stories of an improbable nature, he commonly prefaces them with—"They say," or "men say—but I have not seen it;" though he is to blame in not citing his authorities, when he adopts the accounts of others. He acknowledges only, in general terms, (p. 381—2, edit. 1725) that his book

was made partly from hearsay, and partly from his own observation. It is entitled, "The Voyage and Travels of sir John Mandeville, knight, which treateth of the way to Hierusalem, and of the marvels of Ind, with other Islands and Countries."

As extracts from this ancient traveller will be read more for amusement than information, my object has been to select the marvellous rather than the true.

The following introductory passage, from his prologue, mentions generally the countries he had visited; and gives the reader an idea of what he is to expect from the perusal of his work :

And for as much as it is long time passed, that there was no general passage *ne*¹ voyage over the sea; and many men desire to hear speak of the Holy Land, and *han*² thereof great solace and comfort; I John Mandeville, knight, albeit I be not worthy, that was born in England, in the town of St. Albans, passed the sea, in the year of our Lord Jesus Christ 1322, in the day of St. Michæl; and hitherto have been long time over the sea, and have seen and gone through many divers lands, and many

¹ nor.

² have.

provinces and kingdoms and isles, and have passed through Tatary, Persia, *Ermonye*¹ the Little and the Great; through Lybia, Chaldea, and a great part of Ethiopia; through Amazonia, Ind the Less and the More, a great part; and throughout many other isles that *ben*² about Ind; where dwell many divers folks, and of divers manners and laws, and of divers shapes of men. Of which lands and isles I shall speak more plainly hereafter. And I shall devise you some part of things that there *ben* when time shall *ben*³, after it may best come to my mind; and specially for them, that will and are in purpose for to visit the holy city of Jerusalem, and the holy places that are thereabout. And I shall tell the way that they should hold thither: for I have oftentimes passed and ridden the way, with good company of many lords, God be thanked.

And ye should understand that I have put this book out of Latin into French, and translated it again out of French into English, that every man of my nation may understand it. But lords and knights and other noble and worthy men, that *conne*⁴ Latin but little, and *kan ben*⁵ beyond the sea, know and understand, if I err in devising, for forgetting, or else; that they may redress it and amend it. For things passed out of long 'time from a man's mind, or from his sight, turn one into forgetting: because that mind

¹ Armenia. ² are. ³ be. ⁴ know. ⁵ have been.

of man *ne*¹ may not *ben*² comprehended *ne*³ withheld,
for the frailty of mankind.

*Of Hippocras's daughter transformed from a woman to
a dragon.*

Some men say that in the isle of *Lango*⁴ is yet the daughter of Hippocras, in form and likeness of a great dragon, that is an hundred fathoms of length, as men say ; for I have not seen her And they of the isles call her the Lady of the Land. And she lieth in an old castle, in a cave, and sheweth twice or thrice in the year, and she doth none harm to no man, *but if*⁵ men do her harm. And she was thus changed and transformed, from a fair damsel into likeness of a dragon, by a goddess that was *clept Deane*⁶. And men say, that she shall so endure in the form of a dragon, unto the time that a knight come, that is so hardy, that dare come to her and kiss her on the mouth : and then shall she turn again to her own kind, and be a woman again ; but after that she shall not live long. And it is not long *sithen*⁷ that a knight of the Rhodes, that was hardy and doughty in arms, said that he would kiss her. And when he was upon

¹ neither. ² be. ³ nor. ⁴ An island not far from Crete.

⁵ unless.

⁶ called Diana.

⁷ since.

his courser, and went to the castle, and entered into the cave, the dragon lift up her head against him. And when the knight saw her in that form so hideous and so horrible, he flew away. And the dragon bare the knight upon a rock, *maugre his hede*¹; and from this rock she cast him into the sea; and so was lost both horse and man. And also a young man, that wist not of the dragon, went out of a ship, and went through the isle, till that he came to the castle and came into the cave; and went so long, till that he found a chamber, and there he saw a damsel, that *kembed*² her head, and looked in a mirror; and she had much treasure about her; and he *trowed*³ that she had been a common woman, that dwelled there to receive men to folly. And he abode till the damsel saw the shadow of him in the mirror. And she turned her toward him, and asked him what he would? And he said he would be her lemman, or paramour. And she asked him, if that he were a knight. And he said, Nay. And then she said, that he might not be her lemman; but she bad him go again unto his fellows, and make him a knight, and come again upon the morrow, and she should come out of the cave before him; and then come and kiss her on the mouth and have no dread: for I shall do thee no manner harm, albeit that thou

¹ in spite of his heed, i. e. care or caution.

² combed.

³ supposed.

see me in likeness of a dragon. For though thou see me hideous and horrible to look on, *I do thee to wy-tene*¹, that it is made be enchantment: for without doubt, I am none other than thou seest now, a woman; and therefore dread thee nought. And if thou kiss me thou shalt have all this treasure, and be my lord, and lord also of all that isle. And he departed from her and went to his fellows to the ship, and let make him knight, and came again upon the morrow, for to kiss this damsel. And when he saw her come out of the cave, in form of a dragon, so hideous and so horrible, he had so great dread, that he flew again to the ship, and she followed him. And when she saw that he turned not again, she began to cry as a thing that had much sorrow: and then she turned again into her cave; and anon the knight died. And *sithen* hitherwards, might no knight see her, but that he died anon. But when a knight cometh, that is so hardy to kiss her, he shall not die; but he shall turn the damsel into her right form and kindly shape, and he shall be lord of all the countries and isles above-said.

Of the devil's head in the Valley Perilous.

Beside that isle of Mistorak, upon the left side, nigh to the river Phison, is a marvellous thing.

¹ I give thee to understand.

There is a vale between the mountains, that dureth nigh a four mile. And some *clepen*¹ it the Vale Enchanted, some *clepen* it the Vale of Devils, and some *clepen* it the Vale Perilous; in that vale *hearen*² men oftentime great tempests and thunders, and great murmurs and noises, all day and nights; and great noise as it were sound of tabors and of *nakeres*³ and trumps, as though it were of a great feast. This vale is all full of devils, and hath been always. And men say there, that it is one of the entries of hell. In that vale is plenty of gold and silver; wherefore many misbelieving men, and many christian men also, *gon*⁴ in often time, for to have of the treasure that there is, but few comen again; and namely, of the misbelieving men, ne of the christian men *nouthen*⁵: for they *ben* anon strangled of devils. And in mid place of that vale, under a rock, is an head of the visage of a devil bodily, full horrible and dreadful to see; and it sheweth not but the head, to the shoulders. But there is no man in the world so hardy, christian man *ne* other, but that he would *ben adrad*⁶ for to behold it; and that it would seemen him to die for dread; so is it hideous for to behold. For he beholdeth every man so

¹ call.² hear.³ Nakeres.—Nacara, (Du Cange,) a kind of brazen drum used in the cavalry.⁴ go.⁵ neither.⁶ afraid.

sharply with dreadful *eyen*¹ that *ben* evermore moving and sparkling as fire, and changeth and steereth so often in divers manner, with so horrible countenance, that no man dare not *nighen*² towards him. And *fro*³ him cometh smoke and stink, and fire, and so much abomination, that *unethe*⁴ no man may there endure. But the good christian men, that *ben* stable in the faith, entren well withouten peril: for they will first *shriven hem*⁵, and marken him with the token of the Holy Cross; so that the fiends *ne han no*⁶ power over hem. But albeit that they *ben* withouten peril, *zit nathales*⁷ ne *ben* they not withouten dread, when that they seen the devils visibly and bodily all about *hem*, that maken full many divers *assaults*⁸ and menaces in air and in earth, and *agasten*⁹ *hem* with strokes of thunder-blasts and of tempests. And the most dread is, that God will taken vengeance then, of that men *han*¹⁰ misdona *again*¹¹ his will. And ye should understand, that when my fellows and I weren in that vale, we weren in great thought whether that we dursten putten our bodies in aventure, to *gon* in or *non*, in the protection of God. And some of our fellows *accordeden*¹² to enter, and some *noght*.¹³ So there were with us two worthy men,

¹ eyes. ² approach. ³ from.

⁴ scarcely. ⁵ confess themselves. ⁶ have no.

⁷ yet nevertheless. ⁸ assaults. ⁹ terrify. ¹⁰ have.

¹¹ against. ¹² agreed. ¹³ not.

friars minors that were of Lombardy, that said, that if any man would enter, they would go in with us. And when they had said so, upon the gracious trust of God and of *hem*¹, we let sing mass; and made every man to be *shriven* and *houseld*²; and then we entered fourteen persons; but at our going out, we were but nine. And so we *wisten*³ never, whether that our fellows were lost, or *ello*⁴ turned again for dread; but we *ne* saw them never after; and *tho*⁵ were two men of Greece and three of Spain; and our other fellows that would not go in with us, they went by another coast to *ben* before us, and so they were. And thus we passed that perilous vale, and found therein gold and silver and precious stones and rich jewels great plenty, both here and there, as us seemed; but whether that it was, as us seemed, *I wot nere*⁶; for I touched none, because that the devils be so subtle to make a thing to seem otherwise than it is, for to deceive mankind; and therefore I touched none; and also because that I would not be put out of my devotion: for I was more devout then than ever I was before or after; and all for the dread of fiends, that I saw in divers figures; and also for the great multitude of dead bodies that I saw there lying by

¹ themselves.

² to be confessed, and to have the Lord's Supper administered to him.

³ knew. ⁴ else. ⁵ they. ⁶ I never knew.

the way, by all the vale, as though there had been a battle between two kings, and the mightiest of the country, and that the greater part had been discomfitted and slain. And I *trow*¹ that *unethe*² should any country have so much people within him, as lay slain in that vale, as us thought; the which was an hideous sight to *seen*³. And I marvelled much, that there were so many, and the bodies all whole *withouten* rotting. But I *trowe* that fiends made them seem to be so whole, *withouten* rotting. But that might not be to my *avys*⁴, that so many should have entered so newly, *ne* so many newly slain, without stinking and rotting. And many of them were in habit of Christian men; but I *trowe* well, that it were of such, that went in for *covetyse*⁵ of the treasure that was there, and had overmuch feebleness in faith; so that their hearts *ne* might not endure in the belief for dread. And therefore were we the more devout a great deal; and yet we were cast down, and beaten down many times to the hard earth, by winds and thunders and tempests; but evermore, God, of his grace, helped us. And so we passed that perilous vale, without peril, and without incumbrance. Thanked be Almighty God.

¹ suppose.² scarcely.³ sec.⁴ advice, understanding.⁵ covetousness.

The reason why The Great Khan, emperor of India, was known in Europe by the name of *Prester John*, Mandeville states to be the following :

I *trow* that ye know well enow, and have heard say, wherefore this emperor is *clept* Prester John. But *natheless*¹ for them that know not, I shall say you the cause. It was sometime an emperor there that was a worthy and full noble prince, that had Christian knights in his company, as he hath that is now. So it befel, that he had great list for to see the service in the church, among Christian men. And then *dured* Christendom beyond the sea. All Turkey, Syria, Tatary, Jerusalem, Palestine, Arabia, Halappu, and all the land of Egypt. So it befel that this emperor came, with a Christian knight with him, into a church in Egypt ; and it was the Saturday in Whitsun week. And the bishop made orders. And he beheld and listened the service full *tentyfly*². And he asked the Christian knight, what men of degree they should be, that the prelate had before him. And the knight answered and said, that they should be priests. And then the emperor said, that he would no longer be *clept* king, *ne* emperor, but priest ; and that he would have the name of the first priest that

¹ nevertheless.

² attentively.

went out of the church; and his name was John. And so evermore *sithen*, he is *clept* Prester John.

I shall close my extracts from this author with his concluding paragraph.

I John Mandeville, knight abovesaid, (although I be unworthy,) that departed from our countries, and passed the sea, the year of grace 1322, that have passed many lands, and many isles and countries, and searched many full strange places, and have been in many full good honourable company, and at many a fair deed of arms, (albeit that I did none myself, for mine ableinsufficiency) now I am come home *maugre* myself, to rest: for gouts, *artetykes*¹, that me *distraught*², they define the end of my labour, against my will, God knoweth. And thus taking solace in my wretched rest, recording the time past, I have fulfilled these things and put them written in this book, as it would come into my mind, the year of Grace 1356 in the 34th year that I departed from our countries. Wherefore I pray to all the readers and hearers of this book, if it please them, that they would pray to God for me; and I shall pray for them. And all those that

¹ aching of limbs.

² distract.

say for me a *pater-noster*, with an *ave-maria*, that God forgive me my sins, I make them partners, and grant them part of all the good pilgrimages, and of all the good deeds, that I have done, if any be to his pleasure. And not only of those, but of all that ever I shall do unto my life's end. And I beseech Almighty God, from whom all goodness and grace cometh, that he vouchsafe of his excellent mercy and abundant grace, to fulfil their souls with inspiration of the Holy Ghost, in making defence of all their ghostly enemies here in earth, to their salvation, both of body and soul, to worship and thanking of Him, that is Three and One, *withouten* beginning and *withouten* ending; that is, *withouten* quality, good, and without quantity, great; that in all places is present, and all things containing; the which that no goodness may amend *ne* none evil impair; that in perfect trinity liveth and reigneth God, be all worlds and be all times. Amen, amen, amen.

Sir John Mandeville was not the first European traveller who visited the oriental regions. The Arabians who immigrated into Europe, and finally settled in Spain about the ninth century, by their exaggerated descriptions of the wonders to be seen in the east, were the first to excite the curiosity of Eu-

Europeans respecting those distant countries. As the eastern nations at that early period, in addition to their abounding in natural curiosities, really and greatly surpassed those of Europe in the arts and luxuries of life, and in general civilization, the crusaders, a few centuries after, on their return from the Holy Land, served to confirm, and even to magnify the accounts of the Arabians. These accounts, which were partly true and partly fabulous, falling into the hands of the monks, were mixed up with various legendary additions of their own, into treatises, under the title of *Mirabilia Mundi*; which contributing to awaken still more the desire to visit those wonderful countries, several professed travellers into the east during the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, surprised the western world with their marvellous narratives. At the court of the Great Khan, persons of all nations and of all religions, if at all distinguished for talents, were hospitably received, and often preferred.

The first European traveller into the east was Benjamin, a Jew of Tudela in Navarre, who ended his travels in 1173. Having reached Constantinople, he proceeded to Alexandria.

in Ægypt, whence he penetrated through Persia to the frontiers of Tzin, now China. He bears testimony to the immense wealth of Constantinople ; and says that its port swarmed with ships from all countries. He exaggerates, however, in speaking of the prodigious number of Jews in that city ; and in other respects, is full of marvellous and romantic stories.

About the year 1245, William de Rubruquis a monk, was sent, by the command of St. Louis king of France, into Persic Tatar ; as was also Carpini, by Pope Innocent IV. Their books abound with improbabilities. About 1260, Marco Polo, a Venetian nobleman, travelled into Syria and Persia, and to the country uniformly called in the dark ages Cathay, which proves to be the northern part of China. His book, entitled *De Regionibus Orientis*, mentions the immense and opulent city of Cambalu, undoubtedly Pekin. Hakluyt, the collector of voyages, cites a friar named Oderick, who travelled to Cambalu in Cathay, and whose description of that city corresponds exactly with that of Pekin.

From the accounts of these early travellers into the east, Roger Bacon, about 1280,

formed his geography of that part of the globe, as is evident from what he relates of the Tatars. See Purchas. Pilgrim. 3. 52. Bacon Op. Maj. 228. 235.

There was, moreover, a history of the Tatars popular in Europe about the year 1310. It was either written or dictated by Aiton, a king of Armenia, who after traversing the most remarkable countries of the east, turned monk at Cyprus. His travels, partly from the rank of the author, and partly from the wonderful adventures they contain, were in their day in high estimation.

Leland says that Mandeville, on his return from his travels, gave to the shrine of St. Thomas a Becket, in the cathedral of Canterbury, a glass globe enclosing an apple, which he probably brought from the east. This curiosity was seen by Leland; and he asserts that the apple remained fresh and undecayed. Mandeville also gave to the high altar of St. Alban's abbey church, a sort of *patera*, brought from Egypt, and which, not many years since, was in the hands of an antiquary in London.

Such was the taste for marvellous histories in those times of wonderment and ignorance, that Gyraldus Cambrensis, who

wrote about the year 1200, in his book on Ireland, thought proper, in obedience to the reigning fashion, to entitle it *De Mirabilibus Hiberniæ*. There is also a MS. in the Bodleian library, with the title of *De Mirabilibus Angliæ*. And at length appeared a compilation with the more comprehensive title of *Mirabilia Hiberniæ, Angliæ, et Orientis*; which is among the MSS. in the Royal library. The *Polyhistor* of Solinus, in many MSS. has likewise the title of *De Mirabilibus Mundi*; and we have even *De Mirabilibus Veteris et Novi Testamenti*.

It appears, that the passion for visiting the Holy Land did not cease among us, till late in the reign of Henry the Eighth. Warton mentions one William Wey, Fellow of Eton College, who celebrated Mass, *cum cantu organico*, at Jerusalem in the year 1472; and cites an Itinerary under the title of "The Pilgrimage of Sir Richard Torkington, Parson of Mulberton in Norfolk, to Jerusalem, An. 1517," as extant in the Bodleian Library.

These infatuations are interesting chiefly as they enable us to trace the history of human credulity; but they also exhibit to the philosopher a proof, that feelings of wonderment

must precede curiosity, by which the faculties are expanded and perfected. Thus, the idle visions we have been contemplating eventually gave birth to a spirit of rational inquiry into the topographical state of foreign countries, which produced commerce, and those other valuable improvements which spring from the friendly intercourse of nations.

Richard II.

TRE VISA.—THE POLYCHRONICON.

THE translation of the *Polychronicon*, by Trevisa, is the first prose chronicle in the English language, and is among the earliest prose compositions. It may possibly be equal in bulk to all which existed before it: for in 1248, it is stated by Mr. Ritson, from John of Glastenbury, that no more than four books in English, (and those upon religious subjects,) were found in the library of Glastenbury-abbey, one of the most extensive in the kingdom. Leland also, when he ransacked the monastic and other libraries in the reign of Henry VIII. found only two or three books written in English.

This Chronicle was compiled in Latin, by Ralph Higden, a benedictine of St. Werberg's monastery, now the cathedral in Chester. Higden was born in the reign of Henry III. though in what year is unknown; but, as he is said to have died very aged, in the year 1363, if we assume even the last year of the reign of that prince, or 1272, for the time of his birth, his age will amount to no less than 91 years.

By a comparison which has been made of

some old MS. copies of this *Polychronicon*, (reposited in the Harleian library,) with the *Polycratica Temporum* of Roger Cestrensis, also a Benedictine monk of St. Werberg, a suspicion has arisen that Higden pillaged the greater part of his Chronicle from the *Polycratica*; and that he had a design to appropriate the labours of his brother monk. This supposition is rendered the more probable, from the following circumstance. It is remarked by Bishop Nicholson (English Historical Library, edit. 1714, p. 65,) that, “If you spell the first letters of the several chapters that begin it, you read—*Præsentem Chronicam frater compilavit Ranulphus Monachus Cestrensis*,” a species of whim common with the historians of those times. Still, it should be observed, that Roger, as well as Higden, was a collector, and that the latter has subjoined the names of his authors. The following is a list of his authorities, as enumerated at the latter end of the preface to the first chapter:

1. *Josephus.* 2. *Ægesippus.* 3. *Plinius.* 4. *Trogus Pompeius.* 5. *Justinus.* 6. *Eusebius in Historiâ Ecclesiasticâ.* 7. *Historia Ecclesiastica Triptita cuique tres sunt Auctores, Eusebius, Hieronimus, et Theodorus Episcopus.* 8.

Augustinus de Civitate Dei. 9. *Orosius Hispanus Terraconensis, Presbyter, in Libro de Ormestrâ Mundi.* 10. *Psydorus Hyspalensis, in Libro Ethimologiæ.* 11. *Solinus de Mirabilibus Mundi.* 12. *Henricus Huntendon, Archidiaconus.* 13. *Eutropius.* 14. *Gualterus Oxoniensis, Archidiaconus.* 15. *Paulus Diaconus, in Historiâ Longobardorum.* 16. *Alfridus Beverlancensis, Thesaurarius.* 17. *Cassiodorus de Gestis Imperatorum et Pontificum.* 18. *Galfridus Monamutensis, in Historiâ Britonum.* 19. *Methodius, Martyrus et Episcopus; cui incarcerato revelavit angelus de mundi statu, principio, et fine.* 20. *Willelmus Ryvalensis.* 21. *Giraldus Cambrensis qui descripsit Topographiam Hyberniam, Itinerarium Walliæ, et vitam regis Henrici Secundi, sub Triplici Distinctiones.* 22. *Succonius de Gestis Romanorum.* 23. *Valerius Maximus de Gestis Memoriam.* 24. *Macrobius, in Saturnalibus.* 25. *Johannes Salisburiensis, in suo Policraticon.* 26. *Priscianus Grammaticus, in Cosmographiâ.* 27. *Petrus Comestor, in Historiâ Scholasticâ.* 28. *Hugusio Pysanus, Episcopus, in Magnis Divinationibus suis.* 29. *Gregorius de Mirabilibus Romæ.* 30. *Vincentius Beluacensis, in Speculo Historiali.* 31. *Beda de Gestis Anglorum.* 32.

Puocarnotensis, Episcopus. 33. *Beda de Naturis Rerum.* 34. *Historia Francorum.* 35. *Beda de Temporibus.* 36. *Titus Livius de Gestis Romanorum.* 37. *Gildas de Gestis Britonum.* 38. *Martinus, Penitentiarius Domini Papæ, in Cronicis suis de Imperatoribus et Pontificis.* 39. *Marianus Scotus.* 40. *Willelmus Malmesburiensis, Monachus, de Gestis Regum Angliæ et Pontificum.* 41. *Florentius Wigorum, Monachus, quem in annorum supputatione, unà cum Mariano, potissime sum secutus.*

Florence of Worcester, to whom Higden says he was particularly indebted in his computation of time, was the earliest historian of the twelfth century. He abridged, or rather transcribed Marianus; adding, however, a few judicious collections of his own, from the Saxon Chronicle, and other sources. To whomsoever be referred the principal merit of the compilation, it is generally agreed, that Higden continued the Chronicle from 1329 to 1357, if not to the end of the seventh book. Higden is valuable, as having preserved many remains of ancient Chronicles, now lost.

The *Polychronicon* is thus stiled, as the author himself informs us, from its comprehending the transactions of many ages; and it is di-

vided into seven books, from the example of Him who wrought all his works in six days, and rested on the seventh. The first describes all countries in general, particularly Britain. The other six comprise a concise account of civil history, from the creation, down to the author's own time; that is, the reign of Edward III. terminating in the year 1357.

The part which treats of England, in the first book, comprehends 15 chapters. The second book contains the transactions from Adam to the burning of the Temple of the Jews. The third extends to the transmigration of the people to Christ. The fourth from Christ to the arrival of the Saxons. The fifth from the Saxons to the Danes. The sixth from the Danes to the Normans. The seventh from the Normans to the reign of Edward III.

That part which relates to the Britons and Saxons was published by Dr. Gale, in 1691, fol. Oxon. among his "*Quindecim Scriptores Historiæ Brittanicæ Saxonicæ Anglo-Danicæ.*"

This Chronicle was translated into English, as already suggested, by John De Trevisa, a Cornish man, and vicar of Berkley, Gloucestershire; who undertook the task at the request of Thomas Lord Berkley, to whom he was

chaplain. The translation begins with Julius Cæsar; and it was finished, according to the Cottonian MS. in the tenth of Richard II. or in 1387.

Trevisa's work commences with a prefatory dialogue on the Utility of Translations; *De Utilitate Translationum; Dialogus Inter Clericum et Patronum*; the former stating his reasons for the translation, the latter opposing it as unnecessary; the Latin being the more general language. After this comes the Epistle of Trevisa to his Lordship; and which is sufficiently curious for extraction:

Wealth and worship to my worthy and worshipful Lord Thomas, Lord of Barkley. I John Trevisa, your priest and *bedcman*¹, obedient and *buxom*² to work your will, hold in heart, think in thought, and mean in mind your needful meaning and speech that ye spake and said, that ye would have English translation of Ranulph of Chester's Books of Chronicles. Therefore I will *fond*³ to take that travail, and make English translation of the same books, as God granteth me grace. For blame of backbiters will I not *blinne*⁴ for envy of enemies, for evil spiting and speech

¹ confessor.

² alert.

³ engage, try, endeavour.

⁴ cease, stop.

of evil speakers will I not *leave*¹ to do this deed: for travail will I not spare. Comfort I have in needful making and pleasing to God, and in knowing that I *wote*² that it is your will.

For to make this translation clear, and plain, to be known and understanden, in some place, I shall set word for word, and active for active, and passive for passive à-row, right as it standeth, without changing of the order of words. But in some place I must change the order of words, set active for passive, and *againward*³; and in some place I must set a reason for a word, and tell what it meaneth. But for all such changing, the meaning shall stand and not be changed. But some words and names of countries, of lands, of cities, of waters, of rivers, of mountains and hills, of persons, and of places, must be set and stand for themselves in their own kind; as Asia, Europa, Africa, and Syria; Mount Atlas, Sinai, and Oreb; Marah, Jordan, and Armon; Bethlem, Nazareth, Jerusalem, and Damascus; Hannibal, Rasin, Ah-suerus and Cyrus; and many such words and names. If any man make of these Books of Chronicles a better English translation and more profitable, God *do him meed*⁴. And by cause ye make me do this *meedful*⁵ deed, he that *quiteth*⁶ all good deeds, *quite your meed*⁷, in the bliss of heaven, in wealth and liking

¹ omit. ² know. ³ contrariwise. ⁴ reward him.

⁵ worthy of reward. ⁶ requiteth. ⁷ give you your reward.

with all the holy saints of mankind, and the nine orders of angels; as angels, archangels, principates, potestates, virtues, dominations, thrones, cherubin and seraphin, to see God in his blissful face in joy withouten any end. Amen.

Of the Manners of the ancient Irish.—Chap. 34, fol. 34.

Solinus saith that men of this land *ben* strong of nation, houseless, and great fighters; and account right and wrong all for one thing, and *ben* single of clothing, scarce of meat, cruel of heart, and angry of speech, and drinketh first blood of dead men that *ben* slain; and then *weshen*¹ their visages therewith, and holden them paid with flesh and fruit instead of *mete*,² and with milk instead of drink; and use much playing, idleness and hunting; and travail full little. In their childhood they *ben* hard nourished and hard fed; and they *ben* unseemly of manners and of clothing; and have breech and hosen all of one wool; and strait hoods that stretcheth a cubit over the shoulders behind; and foldings instead of mantles and of cloaks. Also they use no saddles, boots, *ne* spurs when they ride; but they drive their horses with a *chambred ycrde*³ in the one end. Instead of bits with treaches, and of bridles of *recst*, they use bridles that let

¹ wash.

² meat.

³ chamferred yard.

not their horses to eat their meat. They fight unarmed, naked in body; *nathless*¹ with two darts and spears and with broad *sparthes*², they fight with one hand.

These men forsake tilling of land, and keepen pasture for beasts. They use long beards and locks hanging down behind their heads. They use no craft of flax, of wool, of metal, *ne* of merchandize, but give them to idleness and to sloth, and reckon rest for *liking*³ and freedom for riches. And Scotland, the daughter of Ireland, use harp, *tymbre*⁴ and tabor. *Nathless*, Irishmen be cunning in two manner instruments of music, in harp, and *tymbre* that is armed with wire and strings of brass; in which instruments, though they play hastily and swiftly, they make right merry harmony and melody with *thycke*⁵ tunes and warbles and notes; and begin from *bemoll* and play secretly under dim sound, under the great strings, and turn again unto the same; so that the greater part of the *craft*⁶ hideth the craft; as it would seem, as though the craft so hid, should be ashamed if it were take. These men *ben* of evil manner in their living; they pay no tithes; they wed unlawfully; they spare not their *allies*⁷; but the brother weddeth the brother's wife. They *ben* busy for to betray their neigh-

¹ nevertheless. ² *sparthe*, an axe or halbert; (Du Cange,) *securis Danica*. ³ pleasure. ⁴ *tymbrel*. ⁵ those. ⁶ art. ⁷ kindred.

hours and other; they bear *sparthes* in their hands instead of staves, and fight against them that trust most to them. These men *ben* variable and unstedfast, treacherous, and guileful. Who that dealeth with them needeth more to be ware of guile, than of craft, of peace than of *brennyng brondes*¹, of honey than of gall, of malice than of knighthood. They have such manners, that they *ben* not strong in wars and in battle *ne* true in peace. They become *gosybs* to them that they will falsely betray in the *gosybrede* and holy kindred. *Everyche*² drinketh other's blood when it is shed. They love some deal their *noryce*³ and their *playfers*, which that suck the same milk that they sucked while they were children. And they pursue their brethren, their cousins, and their other kin, and despisen their kin whiles they live, and avenge their death when they *ben* slain. So long hath the usage of evil customs endured among them, that it hath gotten the mastery over them, and turned treason into *kind*⁴, so far forth that they *ben* traitors by nature. And *aliens* and men of strange lands that dwell among them, followen their manners that *wnnethe*⁵ there is none but he is *besmytted*⁶ with their treason also. Among them many men pissen sitting, and women standing.

¹ fire-brands. ² each. ³ *nourice*, nurse. ⁴ nature.

⁵ scarcely.

⁶ tainted.

There *ben* many men in that land foul shapen in limbs; they lack the benefice of *kind*. So that now here *ben* none better shapen than they that *ben* there well shapen, and none worse shapen than they that *ben* evil shapen. And skilfully nature, hurt and defouled by wickedness of living, bringeth forth such *gromes*¹ and evil shapen of them, that with unlawful dealing, with foul manners and evil living, so wickedly defouleth kind and nature.

In this land and in Wales, old wives and women were wont and *ben*, as men *sayen*², oft for to shape themself in likeness of hares, for to milk their neighbours' *kine*³ and steal *her*⁴ milk. And oft greyhounds runnen after them and pursue them.

Much of the above account of the Customs and Manners of the Irish, was plainly taken from Giraldus Barri's Topography of Ireland. This superstition of old wives (or witches,) turning themselves into hares, and being pursued by greyhounds, &c. is still popular in the western counties of England, and probably in others.

On the subject of witches, I can present the reader with a story, which places in a very strik-

¹ *grome*, offspring? Also a man servant. ² say.

³ cows. ⁴ their.

ing light, the possible illusion of the imagination, under the influence of superstitious opinion. It may be proper to premise, that a *witch*, in her quality of *night-mare*, is stiled, in our popular superstition, a *hag*; and that consequently, a person troubled with the night-mare, is said to be *hag-ridden*.

About fifty years ago, there lived, at a village in Somersetshire, an old woman, who was generally reputed a witch. Her body was dry, and bent with age; she supported her feeble steps with crutches. Her voice was hollow, of mysterious, though hypocritical solemnity, and from her eye proceeded a glaring and a piercing light, which fixed the beholder in silent dread. Around the blazing, hearth many a tale was told, and every tale believed, of goods stolen and cattle slain, by more than human means—how she prophesied of ill to come, and dire mishap; and that whatever was foretold in her dark forebodings, was sure to come to pass;—how, often on the back of lusty cat, or broomstick vile, she traversed with lightening speed the fields of air, to work her witcheries in foreign lands. No one had doubt she had doings with the devil.

A young man of the same village, at the age

of one or two and twenty, and in the full vigour of health, began to receive all of a sudden the visits of the night-mare, every night as regularly as he went to bed. The *sittings* were so weighty and so long continued, that his health was soon materially affected. In the course of three or four months, from a strong and ruddy youth, he became feeble, pale, and emaciated; and finally exhibited the external symptoms of a person in a deep decline. Neither *he*, however, nor his neighbours, to whom he communicated his case, had any doubts respecting the *real* cause of his sufferings.

In spite of the fears of superstition, he was a man of great resolution. He was resolved to lie in wait for the hag, *awake*. He resolved and re-resolved; but unfortunately, was always oppressed by sleep before the critical hour. At length he succeeded. He continued *broad awake*; when, at dead of night, he distinctly heard on the stairs, the sound of footsteps softly and cautiously ascending. He was all alive. He put his hands from under the bed-clothes in readiness to grasp his prey. She reached the foot of the bed, ascended, and proceeded gently and gradually along either leg. Advanced beyond the knee, she was pre-

paring to fall, with her leaden weight upon his breast. In an instant, he leapt towards her, seized her with both his hands by the hair, and held her with convulsive strength. At the same moment, he vociferated to his mother, who slept in an adjoining room, "Mother, I have caught the hag,—bring me a light." The mother, in *certain faith*, flew down stairs for a candle.

Meanwhile, the contest continued with furious violence between the son and hag, who dragged him out of bed; and the struggle was then continued on the floor, with unabated rage. The candle was now kindled; but on the very first glimmer of its rays on the stair-case, the hag, with a supernatural force, tore herself from his grasp, and vanished like lightning from his eager eyes. He was found by his mother standing on the floor of the chamber, almost breathless with the efforts he had used, and with both his hands *full of hair*.

On hearing the story, I eagerly inquired for the locks of hair. He replied, without the slightest surprise or embarrassment: "Ay!—I was much to blame for not keeping the hair: for *that* would have identified her person beyond dispute. But in the hurry of my feelings,

I let it drop on the floor; and *she* took especial care I should never see it more. But I so *overhauled* her, on this occasion, that she returned no more to torment me. It is curious, (said he,) that while I had her in my grasp, and was struggling with her, tho' I felt convinced who she must be, yet her breath, and the whole of her person, appeared to me like those of a blooming young woman."

The person to whom this very singular incident happened is still alive. I have heard the substance of the story, more than once, from his own mouth, and can therefore vouch for the truth of the effect, whatever we may think of the cause.

On the different Languages of the Inhabitants of Britain. Chap. 59, fol. 54.

As it is known how many manner people *ben* in this island, there *ben* also many languages. *Nethless*, Welchmen and Scots that *ben* not *medled*¹ with other nations, keep nigh yet their first language and speech; but yet *tho* Scots that were sometime confederate and dwelled with Picts, draw somewhat after their speech. But the Flemmings that dwell in the west side of Wales,

¹mixed.

have left their strange speech, and spoken like the Saxons. Also Englishmen, tho' they had fro the beginning three manner speeches, southern, northern, and middle speech, in the middle of the land, as they come of three manner people of Germania, *netheless*, by *commixyon*¹ and *medling*² first with Danes, and afterwards with Normans, in many things the country language is *appayred*³. For some use strange *wlaf-fynge*, *chythring*, *harrying*, and *grysbytinge*. This *ap-pairing*⁴ of the language cometh of two things; one is by cause that children that *goon*⁵ to school, learn to speak first English, and then *ben* compelled to construe their lessons in French; and that have *ben* used *syn*⁶ the Normans came into England. Also gentlemen's children *ben* learned and taught from their youth to speak French; and uplandish men will counterfeit and liken themselves unto gentlemen, and *aren besy*⁷ to speak French for to be more set by. Wherefore it is said by a common proverb, "Jack would be a gentleman, if he could speak French."

Trevisa proceeds:

This manner was much used before the great death; but *syth* it is some deal changed: for Sir John Cornwall, a master of grammar, changed the teaching in grammar school, and construction of French into English; and other schoolmasters use

¹ commixture. ² mingling. ³ impaired. ⁴ impairing. ⁵ go:

⁶ since. ⁷ are busy.

the same way now, in the year of our Lord 1365, the 9th year of king Richard II. and leave all French in schools, and use all construction in English; wherein they have advantage one way, that is, that they learn *to sooner*¹ their grammar; and in other, disadvantage: for now they learn no French, ne *con*² none; which is hurt to them that shall pass the sea. And also gentlemen have much *left to teach* their children to speak French.

Ranulph. It seemeth a great wonder that Englishmen have so great diversity in their own language in sound and in speaking of it, which is all in one island. And the language of Normandy is comen out of another land, and hath one manner sound among all men that speaketh it in England: for a man of Kent, southern, western, and northern men, spoken French all like in sound and speech; but they cannot speak their English so.

Trevisa. *Nethelless*, there is as many divers manners of French in the *royalme*³ of France, as is divers English in the *royalme* of England.

R. Also of the foresaid tongue, which is *departed*⁴ in three, is great wonder: for men of the east with men of the west, accorden better in sounding of their speech, than men of the north with men of the south. Therefore it is, that men of Mercii, that *ben* of middle

¹ for the sooner.² know.³ realm.⁴ divided.

England, as it were partners with the ends, understanden better the side languages, northern and southern, than northern and southern understandeth either other.

W. All the languages of the Northumbres, and especially at York, is so sharp *slytting*, *frotynge* and *unshape*, that we southern men may ~~unnet~~ understanden that language. I suppose the cause be, that they be nigh to the aliens that speak strangely. And also by cause that the kings of England abide and dwell more in the south country, than in the north country. The cause why they abide more in the south country than in the north country, is by cause there is better corn land, *moo*¹ people, *moo* noble cities, and *moo* profitable havens in the south country than in the north.



Of the Manners of this (the Welch) nation. Chap. 60.

For the manners and the doing of Welchmen and of Scots *ben* tofore somewhat declared; now I purpose to tell and declare the manners and the conditions of the *medlyd*² people of England. But the Flemmings that *ben* in the west side of Wales *ben* now turned as they were English, because they

¹ more.

² mixed.

company with Englishmen. And they *ben* mighty and strong to fight, and *ben* the most enemies that Welshmen have, and use merchandize and clothing, and *ben* all ready to put themselves to adventures and to peril in the sea and land, by cause of great winning; and *ben* ready some time to go to the plow, and some time to deeds of arms, when place and time axeth. It seemeth of these men a great wonder, that in a *boon*¹ of a wether's right shoulder, when the flesh is sodden away and not roasted, they know *what it have be done*², is done, and shall be done, as it were by a spirit of prophecy, and of wonderful craft. They tell what is done in far countries, tokens of peace or of war, the state of the *royalme*, slaying of men, and *spouse-breech*³. Such things they declare certainly of tokens and signs, that be in such a shoulder *boon*.

R. But the Englishmen that dwellen in England, and *ben* medled in the island, and *ben ferre*⁴ fro the places that they sprung of first, turnen to contrary deeds *lightly*⁵, without enticing of any other men, by their own assent. And so uneasy also, full impatient of peace, enemy of *besynes*⁶, and full of sloth. W. de Pon, *libro* 3. saith, that when they have destroyed *her* enemies all to ground, then they fight

¹ bone. ² what has been done. ³ matrimonial infidelity.

⁴ far. ⁵ easily, capriciously. ⁶ business.

with themselves, and *sleeth*¹ each other, as a void and an empty stomach *wyrcheth*² in itself.

R. *Netheless* men of the south *ben* easier and more mild than men of the north: for they be more *vustable*³, more cruel, and more uneasy. The middle men *ben* some deal partners with both. Also they use them to gluttony more than other men, and *ben* more costlier in meat and clothing. Me supposed that they took that vice of king Hardekunt, that was a Dane: for he *hete*⁴ set forth twice double mess at dinner and at supper. Also these men *ben* speedful on horse and foot, able and ready to all manner deeds of arms, and *ben* wont to have victory and mastery in every fight, where no treason is walking; and *ben* curious, and can well tell deeds and wonders that they have seen. Also they *goo* in divers lands; *unneth* *ben* any men richer in their own land, or more gracious in *ferre* and strange lands. They can better win and get new, than keep their own heritage. Therefore it is that they be spread so wide, and *wene*⁵ that every land is their own. The men be able to all manner sleight and wit; but before the deed, blundering and hasty; and more wise after the deed; and leaveth off *lightly*⁶ what they have begun. *Poly. libro sexto.* Therefore Eugenius, the Pope, said that Eng-

¹ slay. ² *wyrcheth*, from *werke*, to worke or fret.

³ inflammable, passionate. ⁴ ordered, commanded [to be].

⁵ imagine. ⁶ easily, capriciously.

lishmen were able to do whatsoever they would, and to be set and put before all other, *ne were that light wit letteth*¹. And as Hannibal said that the Romans might not be overcome, but in their own country; so Englishmen *mowe*² not be overcome in strange lands; but in *her* own country they be lightly overcome.

R. These men despise their own, and praise other men's, and *unneth ben* pleased *ner*³ *apayed*⁴ with their own estate. What befalleth and becometh other men, they will gladly take to themselves. Therefore it is that a *yeman*⁵ arrayeth him as a squire; a squire as a knight; a knight as a duke; a duke as a king. Yet some *goo* about, and like to all manner state, and *ben* in no state: for they that will take every degree, be of no degree.

This information relative to the Manners of the Welch, is chiefly taken from Giraldus de Barri, as the reader will readily discover by consulting that author. It is dispersed through several chapters in the last part of the work, which contains a description of Wales and its inhabitants. A splendid edition of Giraldus Cambrensis, in two elegant volumes quarto, has been lately given to the public, by Sir Richard Colt

¹ This phrase probably means "nor were they to be diverted from their purpose by any ordinary capacity or obstacle.

² may. ³ nor. ⁴ appeased, satisfied. ⁵ yeoman.

Hoare, translated into English, and illustrated with views, annotations, and a life of the author.

The *Polychronicon* was continued by Caxton, from 1357 to 1460, the first year of Edward IV. being a period of one hundred and three years. For this undertaking he assigns the following reasons:

“For as much as *syth* the accomplishment of this said book, made by the said Ranulph, ended the year of our Lord 1357, many things have fallen which *ben* requisite to be added to this work, because men’s wits in their time *ben* oblivious and *lightly* forget many things *digne*¹ to be put in memory; and also there cannot be found in these days, but few that write in their registers such things as daily happen and fall; therefore, I’ William Caxton, a simple person, have endeavoured me to write first over all the said book of *Polychronicon*, and somewhat have changed the rude and old English, that is to wit, certain words which in these days be neither used, *ne* understood. And, furthermore,

¹ worthy.

have put in emprint, to the end that it may be had, and the matters therein comprised, to be known, for the book in general touching shortly many notable matters; and also am avised to make another book after this said work, which shall be set here after the same, and shall have his chapters and his table apart; for I dare not presume to set my book *ne* join it to his, for divers causes. One is, for as much as I have not, *ne* can get no books of auctory treating of such *Cronykes*,¹ except a little book named *Fasciculus Temporum*, and another called *Aureus de Universo*, in which books I find right little matter *syth* the said time. And another cause is, for as much as my rude simpleness and ignorant making, ought not to be compared, set, *ne* joined to his book. Then I shall, by the grace of God, set my work after, apart, for to accomplish the years *syth* that he finished his book, unto the year of our Lord, 1460, and the first year of the reign of king Edward IV. which amount to 103 years."

This complaint of Caxton, of the want of proper sources of information obviously arose from the scarcity of books before the inven-

¹ Chronicles.

tion of printing. Besides, the fifteenth century was peculiarly barren of good writers, particularly of history. Yet, even in that age, there were authors in manuscript (though Caxton was not so fortunate as to get access to them, nor even knew of their existence,) from whom might have been derived far more ample documents. Such are Froissard; R. Avesbury; Tit. Livius; T. de la More; J. Rosse; H. Knyghton; J. Walsingham; J. Wetheram; J. Otterborne; &c. &c. By the invention of printing, these authors are become more extensively known than at the time of their writing.

What Caxton says of Trevisa's Translation is remarkable. In the course of a hundred and twenty years, the time which had elapsed between that translation and its being printed by him, it appears that the language had undergone such alterations, that many words used by Trevisa had ceased to be employed, and even to be understood. This great change was especially promoted by the renowned poets Chaucer and Gower, to whom the early improvement of our language is chiefly to be attributed.

Caxton, however, did not escape censure for

changing what he deemed the obsolete language: for says he:

“Some gentlemen blamed me, saying, that in my translations, I have over-curious terms, which could not be understand of common people, and desired me to use old and homely terms in my translations. As I fain would satisfy every man, so to do, I took an old book and read therein; but certainly the English was so rude and broad, that I could not well understand it. Also, the Lord Abbot of Westminster did do shew to me late certain evidences written in old English, for to reduce it into our English then used; but it was written in such wise, that it was more like to Dutch than English; so that I could not reduce, *ne* bring it to be understonden. And certainly, our language now used, varyeth far from that which was spoken, when I was born; for we Englishmen *ben* born under the domination of the moon, which is never stedfast, but ever wavering; waxing one season, and waneth and decreaseth another season. And common English that is spoken in one shire, varyeth from another.”

As a confirmation of this last assertion, he tells the following story:

“In my days (says he) happened, that oer-

tain merchants were in a ship in *Tamyse*¹, for to have sailed over the sea into Zealand; and for lack of wind, they tarried at Foreland, and went to land for to refresh them. And one of them, named Sheffelde, a mercer, came into an house, and axed for meat, and specially he axed for eggs. And the good wife answered that she could speak no French. And the merchant was angry, for he could speak no French, but would have had eggs, and she understood him not. And then, at last, another said that he would have *eyren*. Then, the good wife said, that she understood him well."

On this Caxton exclaims:

"Lo! what should a man in these days now write eggs or *eyren*, certainly it is hard to please every man, because of diversity and change of language: for in these days, every man that is in any reputation in his country, will utter his communication and matters, in such manners and terms, that few men shall understand them."

Again he informs us, "That some honest and great clerks had been with him, and desired him to write the most curious terms that he could find. And thus (says he) between plain,

¹ Thames.

rude, and curious, I stand abashed. But, in my judgment, the common terms that be daily used *ben lighter*¹ to be understand than the old and ancient English."

He therefore concluded, "for a mean between both; and to reduce and translate into our English, not over rude *ne* curious, but in such terms as should be understood, by God's grace, according to his copy."

Caxton introduces his own performance with a short prologue. *Incipit liber ultimus.*

"Thence following this fore written book of *Polychronicon*, I have emprized to ordain this new book, by the sufferance of Almighty God, to continue the said work briefly; and to set in historical things such as I have can get, from the time that he left, that was in the year of our Lord one thousand three hundred and seven and fifty, unto the year of our said Lord, a thousand four hundred and sixty, and to the first year of the reign of king Edward IV."

This additional book consists of thirty-three chapters, and concludes thus: "And here I make an end of this little work, as nigh as I can find, after the form of the work tofore made by Ranulph, monk of Chester. And whereas there

¹ easier.

is fault, I beseech them that shall read it, to correct it: for if I could have found more stories, I would have set in it more; but the substance that I can find and know, I have shortly set *hem* in this book, to the intent, such things as have been done *syth* the death, or end of the said book of *Polychronicon*, should be had in remembrance, and not put in oblivion, *ne* forgetting; praying all them that shall see this simple work to pardon me of my simple and rude writing. Ended the second day of July, the 22d year of the reign of king Edward IV. and of the incarnation of our Lord a thousand four hundred four score and twain. Finished by Caxton."

Higden had filled his margins with chronological tables, in double and triple columns. These were probably omitted in the copy which Caxton followed, as they were left unprinted by him. In some of the printed copies, therefore, those tables are found written throughout with red ink, perhaps with his own hand.

Wynkin de Worde, in his edition of the English *Polychronicon*, in 1495, says, that in imitation of his master Caxton, "He had added such stories as *he* could find, from the end that Ranulph finished his book, which was in 1357,

unto the year 1495, which *ben* 138 year." In the Cottonian library is a manuscript of the latter part of this history, which ends in 1326, and is continued by some unknown hand, to the 15th of king Richard II. or 1392.

We owe considerable obligations to Trevisa, in his being one of the first to give a literary currency to his native language. He was not merely the translator of the *Polychronicon*, but of the Old and New Testament, and at the instance of the same munificent patron, Lord Berkely; though it does not appear that any copy of this translation now remains. It is mentioned by Caxton, in the preface to his edition of the English *Polychronicon*. He was moreover the translator of several other works; as Bartholomew Hautville, *de Proprietatibus Rerum*, lib. 19, printed by Wynkin de Worde, 1494, folio: and Vegetius *de Arte Militari*. See also more of his translations in MSS. Harl. 1900.

WICLIFFE.

JOHN WICLIFFE, the memorable English Reformer, was born in the parish of Wicliffe, near Richmond, in Yorkshire. He was educated at Oxford, where he obtained distinguished academical honours, having been elevated successively to the Mastership of Baliol College, to the Wardenship of Canterbury Hall, and to the Professorship of Divinity in that University. This last promotion he obtained in 1372.

In his professorial capacity, he found his province invaded, and the privileges of the University violated, by the pretensions of the Mendicants; and at first only gratified his just resentment by throwing out some censures upon the several orders of friars; in which, however, he could not forbear touching upon the usurpations of the pope, their great patron and abettor. For this he was deprived of the wardenship of his college by the archbishop of Canterbury, who substituted a monk in his place; upon which he appealed to the pope, who, by way of rebuke for the freedom with

which he had treated the monastic orders, confirmed the archiepiscopal sentence. Wicliffe, now more exasperated than ever, gave full scope to his indignation, and attacked without distinction, both in his sermons and other pieces, not only the whole body of the monks, but the encroachments and tyranny of the church of Rome, with other ecclesiastical corruptions.

In the year 1365, we find the name of Wicliffe first mentioned in the annals of our country. It was on occasion of the demand of pope Urban V. for the payment of the arrears of the tribute of one thousand marks *per annum*, imposed upon the country by king John; and the payment of which had been neglected since the year 1333. Wicliffe seized this opportunity to write against the papal demand, in opposition to an English monk, who had published in its defence. This recommended him to the particular notice of the king, Edward III. who conferred upon him several benefices, and employed him in various embassies. He was one of the commissioners in the ecclesiastical congress at Bruges, in the year 1374, which was appointed to settle the long-disputed question of the papal provisions and reservations. Here, from his intercourse

with the envoys of Gregory XI. he gained new light as to the policy and maxims of the church of Rome; and on his return the year following, he began to expose the whole system of the Romish hierarchy; openly declaring that the pope was *Anti-Christ* and that *Man of Sin* of whom St Paul and St. John prophesied; and proceeded to combat the various superstitious doctrines of the papal church. For this strenuous opposition to the pope, he was cited, in 1377, before the upper house of convocation, to answer to a charge of heresy; though he was protected from catholic fury by the generous interference of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, who had before procured for him the living of Lutterworth, in Leicestershire. As this prince, however, had patronised Wicliffe from political motives, he subsequently withdrew his patronage on finding that the reformer contended against errors and usurpations purely religious.

Wicliffe laboured zealously and incessantly to disseminate his doctrines, and his success was wonderful. It is affirmed by the monkish historian Knighton, his cotemporary and inveterate enemy, that more than one half of the people of England became his followers. And such was the persecuting enmity which ac-

uated the catholics at this almost miraculous effect of his preaching, that in 1382, through the instrumentality of Courtney, archbishop of Canterbury, letters patent were obtained from the king, addressed to the university of Oxford, requiring them within seven days from the receipt of this order, to banish him and his adherents from the university, and to suppress all books and writings which favoured the new heresy. He survived his expulsion only two years, when he died at his living at Lutterworth, by a stroke of the palsy, in the year 1384.

His inveterate enemies, the catholic clergy, betrayed an indecent joy at his death, and the council of Constance, thirty years after, decreed that his bones should be taken up and thrown on a dunghill—an act of impotent malice, which was not executed till 1428, on occasion of a bull for that purpose from pope Martin V.

The writings of Wicliffe, which are chiefly in MS. were very voluminous. After his death they were condemned by various councils, and burnt wherever they could be found. It is said by Joh. Coccles, (*Hist. Hussit.*) that Subynco Lepus, archbishop of Prague, in Bohemia, where his doctrines made great progress, pub-

licly burnt more than 200 volumes of them, adorned with costly covers and gold bosses. About the same time many of his books were likewise burnt at Oxford. But the works of Wicliffe were so multiplied, that all these attempts of bigotted malice were impotent to annihilate perhaps any one of his numerous compositions. Bishop Bale, who flourished in the 16th century, affirmed that he had seen about 150 treatises of Dr. Wicliffe, some of them in Latin, and others in English, besides many translations of several books. Many of his tracts were first published in Latin, and afterward in English. To give even a catalogue of his works, would far exceed the bounds proper to allot to this article; but the curious reader is referred to the 9th chapter of Lewis's *Life of Wicliffe*, from which work this account has chiefly been drawn. The fullest catalogue, however, of his writings, is that of bishop Tanner, in his *Bibliotheca Hibernica*.

It has been already observed, that the first objects of his religious censures, were the mendicant friars, whose numbers and encroachments had increased at this period to an alarming degree. That the uninformed reader may form a more correct idea of the justice of these

censures, I shall extract the following brief account of these orders of friars from Mr. Ellis :

“ In consequence of the many abuses which had gradually perverted the monastic institutions, it became necessary, about the beginning of the thirteenth century, to establish a new class of friars, who, possessing no regular revenues, and relying for a subsistence on the general reverence which they should attract by superior talent, or severer sanctity of manners, should become the effectual and permanent support of the papal authority against those heresies which were beginning to infect the church, as well as against the jealousy of the civil power. The new institution consisted of four mendicant orders: the Franciscans, who were also called friars-minors, or minorities, or grey-friars : the Augustine, or Austin-friars : the Dominicans, or friars-preachers, or black-friars : and the Carmelites, or white-friars.

For the purpose of quickening their zeal, the popes bestowed on them many new and uncommon privileges; the right of travelling where they pleased, of conversing with persons of all descriptions, of instructing youth, and of hearing confessions, and bestowing absolution without reserve : and as these advantages na-

aturally attracted to the privileged orders all the novices who were distinguished by zeal or talent, excited their emulation, and ensured the respect of the people, they quickly eclipsed all their rivals, and realised the most sanguine hopes that had been entertained from their establishment.

“ The mendicant orders of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, but particularly the Dominicans, very nearly resembled the Jesuits of modern times. In these orders were found the most learned men, and the most popular preachers of the age. The almost exclusive charge of the national education enabled them to direct the public taste and opinions; the confessional chair placed the consciences of their penitents at their disposal; and their leading members, having discovered that an association in which individual talents are systematically directed to some general purpose is nearly irresistible, soon insinuated themselves into the most important offices of church and state, and guided at their will the religion and politics of Europe. But prosperity, as usual, made them indolent and impudent. They had long been envied and hated, and the progress of general civilization raised up numberless ri-

vals, possessing equal learning, ambition, and versatility of manners, with superior activity and caution. They quarrelled among themselves, and thus lost the favour and reverence of the people; and they were at last gradually sinking into insignificance, when they were swallowed up in the general wreck of monastic institutions.

“The magnificence of their edifices, which excited universal envy, was the frequent topic of Wicliffe’s invective.”

Wicliffe thus exposes their practice of inveigling the youth of the University into their convents:

*Freres*¹, (says he) draweth children from Christ’s religion, into their private order, by hypocrisy, *lesings*², and stealing. For they tellen that their order is more holy than any other, and that they shoulde have higher degree in the bliss of heaven than other men that *bin* not therein, and *seyn* that men of their order should never come to hell, but should dome other men with Christ at doomsday. And so they stealen children *fro* fader and moder, sometime such as *ben* unable to the order, and sometime such as shoulde sustain their fader and moder, by the commandment

¹ Friars.

² lying.

of God ; and thus they *ben* blasphemers taking upon full counsel in *doubty*¹ things that *ben* not expressly commanded *ne* forbidden in holy writ; *sith* such counsel is *appropred*² to the Holy Ghost, and thus they *ben* therefore cursed of God as the Pharisees were of Christ.

The number of scholars in the two Universities in the thirteenth century was prodigious. The famous Richard Fitz-Ralph, archbishop of Armagh, in an oration against the mendicant friars, pronounced before the pope and cardinals in 1357, declares that in his time, the number of students had diminished from 30,000 to 6000, in the University of Oxford. This astonishing diminution he attributed to the arts of those friars, who enticed so many young men into their monasteries, that parents were afraid to send their sons to the University.

Of the ignorance of the clergy of his time, he assures us ;—

That there were many unable curates that *kunnen*³ not the ten commandments, *ne* read their sauter, *ne* understood a verse of it. Nay, that it was then no-

¹ doubtful.

² appropriated.

³ knew.

torious that too many even of the prelates were sinners, in their being ignorant of the law of God, and that the friars supplied for the bishops the office of preaching, which they did in so false and sophistical a manner, that the church was deceived instead of edified.

The priests being too lazy and too ignorant to preach, excused themselves by saying that "Men shoulde[n] cease of preaching, and geven to holy prayers and contemplation, for that helpen more christian men, and is better."

To this Wicliffe replies---

That true men *seyn*¹ boldly that true preaching is better than praying by mouth, yea tho' it come of heart, and clean devotion; and it edifieth more the people; and therefore Christ commanded specially the apostles and disciples to preach the gospel, and not to close them in cloisters, *ne* churches, *ne* stoves, to pray thus. Thus preaching is *algates*² best; *netheless*, devout prayer of men of good life is good in certain time, but it is against charity for priests to pray evermore, and no time to preach, *sith* Christ chargeth priets more for to preach the gospel, than to say mass or matins.

¹ say.

² always.

He afterwards exclaims—

Lord! what charity is it to a cunning man to *chese*¹ his own contemplation in rest, and suffer other men to go to hell for breaking of God's *hests*², when he may lightly teach them, and get more thank of God in little teaching, than by long time in such prayers! Therefore priests shoulde[n] study holy writ, and keep it in their own life, and teach it other men truly and freely, and that is best and most charity; and in certain times pray devoutly, and have sorrow for their sins, and other mens. And then they shoulde[n] be as the firmament over little stars, in comparison of other saints in heaven.

Of Monachism he thus speaks; blaming—

Some priests for unwisely taking a vow of chastity, and defouling wives, widows, and maidens; (and observes that) *sith* fornication is so perilous, and men and women *ben* so frail, God ordained priests in the old law to have wives, and never forbid it in the new law, neither by Christ, *ne* by his Apostles, but rather approved it. But now by hypocrisy of feuds and false men, many binden them to priesthood and chastity, and forsaken wives by God's law, and *shen-den*³ maidens and wives, and fallen foulest of all. For many *ben* priests, and religious in doing and other,

¹ *chose*.

² commands.

³ hurt, wrong, violate.

for to have lustful life and easy, young and strong of complexion, and faren well of meat and drink, and wollen not travail neither in penance, *ne* study of God's law, *ne* teaching, *ne* labour with their hands, and therefore they fallen into lechery in divers degrees, and in sin against *kind*¹.

Of Absolution.

Worldly prelates blasphememen against God, the father of heaven, for they taken upon them power that is specially and only reserved to God; that is, *assoiling*² of sins, and full remission of them. For they taken on them principal *assoiling* of sins, and maken the people to believe so, when they have only *assoiling* as vicars or *massagers*³, to witness to the people that God *assoileth* for contrition; and else neither angel, *ne* man, *ne* God himself *assoileth*, *but if* the sinner be contrite, that is, fully have sorrow for his sins, and have will rather to suffer loss of cattle and worldly friendship, and house, and bodily death, than to do wittingly against commandment and will. And they chargen more their own *assoiling*, than *assoiling* of God. For if a man come to their *schrifs*⁴ and sacraments, they *assoilen* him, and maken him *sicker*,⁵ though the man lie upon himself, and be not *assoiled* of God. And

¹ nature.² loosing, absolving.³ messengers.⁴ confessions.⁵ sure.

though a man be never so *assoiled* of God for his entire sorrow for sin, and charity that he hath now to God, they *seyh*¹ that he is damnable, *but if* he be *assoiled* of them, if he have space thereto, tho' they *ben* cursed heretics and enemies of Christ and his people. And thus they taken little reward to God, when he saith, "in whatever time a sinful man hath entire sorrow for his sins, he shall be safe." These prelates shoulde[n] preach this contrition and mercy of God, and joys of heaven, and the peril of *schrift*, withouten repentance; and foulness of sins, and great pains of hell, and righteousness of God, to make the people to flee sin, and keep truly God's commandments, and not deceiven them by their own power of *assoiling*, *ne* by false pardon, *ne* false prayers, and other *novelries*² besides God's law.

Of Confession.

Confession made to true priests, and witty in God's law, doth much good to sinful men, so that contrition for sins before done, come therewith, and good life, and keeping God's *hests*, and works of mercy done to poor men, sue after.

Of the Eucharist.

The Eucharist is the body of Christ in the form of

¹say. ²novelties.

bread. The right faith of christian men is this, that this worshipful sacrament is bread and Christ's body, as Jesu Christ is very God and very man ; and this faith is grounded in Christ's own word in the Gospel of St. Mathew, Mark, Luke, and by St. Paul, and plainly in holy writ; and thereto accordeth reason and wit at the full.

After this he cites the words of the institution from the Gospels, and from St. Paul; subjoining also several passages from the fathers, and then concludes in these words:

Then *sith* these auctorities of Christ and his apostles, *ben algates soth*¹, and also auctorities of these saints and clerks, *sith* they accorden with holy writ and reason, say we that this sacrament is very bread, and also very Christ's body; and teach we this true belief to christian men openly, and let lords maintainen this truth as they are bounden upon pain of damnation, *sith* it is openly taught in holy writ, and by reason and wit. And damnen we of this cursed heresy of Anti-Christ, and his hypocrites, and worldly priests, saying that this sacrament is neither bread *ne* Christ's body. For this is not taught in holy writ, but [is] fully against St. Austin, and holy saints, and reason and wit.

¹ always truth.

In the time of Wicliffe, it was ordered in the university of Oxford, that priests and curates should not read the scriptures till they were of nine or ten years standing; and some papists went so far as to assert (probably from their hatred to Wicliffe,) "that the decrees of bishops in the church, are of greater authority, weight, and dignity, than is the authority of the scriptures." In reply to this, Wicliffe affirms, that—

Christian men and women, old and young, shoul-
en study fast in the New Testament, and that no
simple man of wit should be *aferde* unmeasurably to
study in the text of holy writ; that pride and *cove-
tisse* of clerks, is cause of their blindness and heresy,
and priveth them *fro* very understanding of holy
writ. That the New Testament is of full authority,
and open to understanding of simple men, as to the
points that *ben* most needful to salvation; that the
text of holy writ *ben* word of everlasting life, and
that he that keepeth meekness and charity, hath the
true understanding and perfection of all holy writ;
that it seemeth open heresy to say that the Gospel
with his truth and freedom sufficeth not to salvation
of christian men, without keeping of ceremonies and
statutes of sinful men and uncunning, that *ben* made
in the time of Satanas and of Anti-Christ; that men

ought to desire only the truth and freedom of the holy Gospel, and to accept man's law and ordinances only in as much as they *ben* grounded in holy scripture, *either* good reason and common profit of Christian people. That if any man in earth, either angel of heaven teacheth us the contrary of holy writ, or any thing against reason and charity, we should flee from him in that, as *fro* the foul fiend of hell, and hold us stedfastly to life and death, to the truth and freedom of the holy Gospel of Jesus Christ; and take us meekly men's sayings and laws, only in as much as they accorden with holy writ and good consciences; no further, for life, neither for death.

Wicliffe seized all occasions of exposing the corruptions of the church of Rome, and the shameless vices of the clergy, both regular and secular; but no part of his conduct excited their rancour so much, as his undertaking to translate the scriptures into English. They affirmed, "It is heresy to speak of the holy scripture in English."

And so (says Wicliffe) they would condemn the Holy Ghost, that gave it in tongues to the apostles of Christ, as it is written, to speak the word of God in all languages that were ordained of God under heaven, as it is written.

Again, he complains—

*Thilk*¹ that have the key of *conning*², have *y-locked* the truth of thy teaching under many wards, and *y-hid fro* thy children.

He gives his reasons for this great undertaking, in the form of an apology.

Lord God! *sithin* at the beginning of faith, so many men translated into Latin, and to great profit of Latin men; let one simple creature of God translate into English, for profit of Englishmen. For, if worldly clerks look well their chronicles and books, they shoulde find, that Bede translated the Bible, and expounded much in Saxon, that was English, *either*³ common language of this land, in his time. And not only Bede, but king Alfred, that founded Oxenford, translated in his last days, the beginning of the Psalter into Saxon, and would more, if he had lived longer. Also Frenchmen, *Bemers*⁴ and Britons, *han*⁵ the bible and other books of devotion and exposition translated into their mother language. Why shoulde not Englishmen have the same in their mother language? I cannot *wit*⁶. No, but for falseness and negligence of clerks, *either for*⁷ our people is not worthy to have so great grace and gift of God, in pain of their old sins.

¹ those.

² knowledge.

³ or.

⁴ Bohemians.

⁵ have.

⁶ know, or tell.

⁷ or because.

As the several translations of the scriptures had very considerable influence on the early progress, as well as on the subsequent establishment, of our language, I shall perhaps be excused for introducing in this place, a brief account of those versions which existed prior to Wicliffe.—It is asserted by Fox, the martyrologist, in the preface to his Saxon copy of the four Gospels, published in 1571, from a MS. in the Bodleian library, that Bede not only translated the whole Bible into Saxon, but also, not long before his death, the Gospel of St. John into the English of his time; that Alfred translated both the Old and New Testament into his native language; that if histories were well examined, it would be found that before the conquest and after, as likewise before Wicliffe and since, the whole body of scripture was translated, by sundry persons, into English; and that Arundel, archbishop of York, and chancellor of England, at the funeral sermon of queen Anne, who died in 1394, affirmed that princess to have had the Gospels in the vulgar tongue, with divers expositions upon the same, which she sent to him to be examined.

it may be proper to remark upon this ab-

stract, that the English language as spoken at present, did not begin to be formed till several centuries after the *Anglo-Saxon* version of Bede, who died in 734; and that the version of the Gospels last-mentioned, as in the possession of queen Anne, was probably that of Wicliffe, as he died ten years before that princess.

There was, however, a metrical version of the scriptures in French, mentioned by Warton, in his *History of English Poetry*, made about the year 1200; and one in prose, by Mace, in 1343; and another also in verse by Raoul de Presles, in the year 1380. From the intimate connection of the English and French, and from the circumstance of the French tongue being the language of the court, at this period, those versions were very possibly known to some of the higher ranks in England. But the lower orders were unable to read even in their vernacular language; and from the general ignorance which hence prevailed, the impudence and selfish policy of the monks, were busy in propagating the opinion, that it was unlawful for any but priests to read the scriptures. Yet, in spite of this terrific dogma, Richard Rolle, hermit of Hampole,

in Yorkshire, who died in 1349, had the courage to translate the Psalter, and the hymns of the church, into English; and he has the honour of being the first who rendered a portion of the contents of this venerable volume into his vernacular language. He also wrote a gloss in English, upon the Psalter; of which there is a somewhat different translation in the Harleian library, also with a gloss; and in the King's library another, from psalm 89, to 118. At the end of the MS. of Hampole's Psalter, in Sidney College, Cambridge, follow the Canticles translated and commented on, as the book of Psalms.

It seems likewise, that some parts, if not the whole of the New Testament, were also translated by different persons, and glossed and explained in the same manner. In the MS. library of Bennet College, Cambridge, is a gloss, in the English, spoken after the conquest, on the following books of the New Testament; viz. the Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke, the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews; among which is inserted, between the Epistles to the Colossians and Thessalonians, the Apocryphal

Epistle to the Laodiceans. The comment which accompanies this version, resembles that of Hampole; being for the most part mystical and allegorical.

Whether Trevisa's version, before mentioned, consisted of the whole Bible, or merely of some particular portions of it, is doubtful; though the latter supposition is the most probable.

These translations, then, of parts of the Old and New Testament, not of the whole Bible, were all made before Wicliffe began to flourish. It is probable, too, that they were not published; but designed merely for the translator's own use.

That the reader may form some idea of these several versions, I shall transcribe the *Magnificate*, as a specimen from each.

Hampole.

My sou¹ worships the Lord, and my ghost joyed in God, my *hele* .

For he looked on the meekness of his handmaiden.

Lo! for why; of that, blissful me shall say all generations.

For he hath done to me great things, that mighty is, and his name *haly*².

¹ health. ² holy.

And the mercy of him fro *kinreden* to *kinredens*, to *tho* dreaden him.

He did might in his arm, he scattered the proud fro the thought of *her* heart.

He did down the mighty off *settle*¹, and he *heghed*² the meek.

The *hungerand*³ he fulfilled of goods, and the rich he left *tome*⁴.

He received Israel his child, he is *umthought*⁵ of his mercy.

As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed in worlds.

MS. Bennet.

My soul *hogis*⁶ or *lofys* God, and my spirit joyed God my *heal*.

For he has beholden the meekness of his hand-maiden.

Lo! therefore blessed me shall say all generations.

For he hath done great things, for he is mighty, and holy *tho* name of him.

And his mercy from progeny to progeny to *tho* dreaden him.

¹ seat. ² *hegh*, or high; to raise, or exalt. ³ hungry.

⁴ empty? ⁵ mindful.

⁶ *hogy*, to *high*, raise, or exalt. ⁷ *lofy*, to *lofty*, raise, or exalt.

He made power in his arm, he *sparbylde*¹ *tho* proud
in thought of their heart.

He down put the mighty off *settle*, and he *heghed*
tho meek.

Tho hungry he filled with goods, and *tho* rich he
left void.

He took Israel his child *umthought* of his mercy.

As he spake to our fathers, Abraham and seed of
him in worlds.

MS. Sydney.

My soul magnifieth the Lord, and my spirit hath
gladed in God mine health.

For he hath beholden the meekness of his hand-
maiden.

Lo forsooth! of this, all generations *scholen*² say me
blessed.

For he that is mighty hath done to me great
things, and his name is holy.

And his mercy *fro* kindred to kindred, to men
dreading him.

He made might in his arm, he scattered proud
men with mind of his heart.

He putted down mighty men *fro* seat, and en-
hanced meek.

He hath fulfilled hungry men with good things, and
hath left rich men void.

¹ scattered.

² shall.

He having mind of his mercy, took up Israel his child.

As he hath spoken to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed into worlds.

Wicliffe's translation, in which he was assisted by several of his followers, probably occupied the last ten years of his life. As he was not sufficiently acquainted with the Hebrew and Greek to translate from them, his version was made from the vulgate, of which he collated numerous copies. His method of translating was literal, or word for word, as had been done before, in the Anglo-Saxonic translation, without much attention to the difference of idiom in the two languages. Hence, this version, in some places, is not very intelligible to those who are unacquainted with the Latin. Wicliffe seems to have done this by design; since, in a prologue to his Psalter, he says, "They who know not the Latin, by the English, may come to many Latin words." It should be observed too, that the vulgate text from which Wicliffe translated, though collated from numerous copies, differed, in many places, from the established vulgate of modern

times. Of this translation, several MS. copies still exist in the libraries of our Universities, in the British Museum, and in other public and private collections. In St. John's College in Oxford is a MS. of the Old Testament, said to be of Wicliffe's own writing, which ends with the Second Book of Maccabees. I shall give a specimen from this, as before quoted by Lewis.

Exod. xx.

And *ye*¹ spake all *yese*² words. I am *ye*³ Lord God, *yat*⁴ lad *ye* out of *ye* land of Egypt, *fro* *ye* house of *servage*⁵. You shalt not have *alien* Gods before me. You shalt not make to *ye*, a graven image, *neyir*⁶ any likeness of *ying*⁷ which is in heaven above, and which is in earth beneath, neither of *yo yingis*⁸ *yt ben*⁹ in waters under earth. You shalt not *herie* *yo*¹⁰, *neyer* you shalt worship.

Levit. xxvi.

Ye *shulen*¹¹ not make to you an idol, and a graven

¹ he. ² these. ³ the. ⁴ that. ⁵ bondage. ⁶ neither.
⁷ thing. ⁸ those things. ⁹ that are. ¹⁰ master them, i. e. treat
 them as masters, or superiors. ¹¹ shall.

image; *neyer ghe¹ shulen* raise *tytlis²*; it is *an-thesis³* for idolatry; *neyer ghe shulen* set a noble stone in your land, that *ye* worship it.

Deutero. v.

You shalt not have *alien* Gods in my sight. You shalt not make to *ye* a graven image, *neyer* a likeness of all *yinges yat ben* in heaven above, and *yat ben* in earth beneath, and *yat* liven in waters under earth. You shalt not *herie* them, and thou shalt not worship *hem*.

To the several books of the New Testament, Wicliffe prefixed the prologues or prefaces of St. Hierome, as they are vulgarly called, with additions of his own. His New Testament was published in 1731, fol. by Lewis, with a history of the English translations of the Bible; from which work this account of them has been chiefly abstracted. A short specimen will suffice to give the reader an idea of the manner in which it is executed.

Rom. chap. viii. v. 28, 29, 30.

And we *witen⁴* that to men that love God, all

¹ ye.

² standing images.

³ author, cause?

⁴ know.

thing is worken together into good, to them that after purpose *ben clepid*¹ saints. For *thilke*² that he knew before, he before ordained by grace, to be made like to the image of his Son, that he be the first begotten, among many brethren. And *thilke* that he before ordained to bliss, them he *cleped*; and which he *clepea*, them he justified; and which he justified, them he glorified.

The most outrageous abuse was bestowed upon Wicliffe by the Catholic party, for thus enabling the multitude to draw at the fountain of their faith. Henry Knyghton, canon of Leicester, his cotemporary, thus speaks of his labours. "This Master John Wicliffe, translated out of Latin into English, the Gospel, which Christ had entrusted with the clergy and doctors of the church, that *they* might minister it to the laity and weaker sort, according to the exigency of times, and their several occasions. So that by this means, the Gospel is made vulgar, and laid more open to the laity, and even to women, who could read, than it used to be to the most learned of the clergy, and those of the best understanding. And so the Gospel jewel,

¹ called.

² that.

or Evangelical pearl, is thrown about and trodden under foot of swine."

This is a mild specimen of Catholic rage. The general alarm, however, among the clergy was so great, that in the 13th of Richard II. a bill was brought into the House of Lords for suppressing it; but was opposed in so firm a tone by the renowned duke of Lancaster, that it was thrown out.

Some of the followers of Wicliffe, encouraged by his success, undertook to review his translation, or rather to make another, which was less literal, but more conformable to the sense. Of this version also, various MS. copies exist in our public libraries.

In the age of Wicliffe, the orthodox divines commonly wrote in Latin. But the sentiments he was so zealous to promulgate, could not have been sufficiently diffused, if he had confined himself to a learned language; and to give his arguments their utmost influence by rendering them intelligible to the bulk of the people, he was compelled to write, as well as to speak, in the vernacular tongue. His quarrel with the pope, therefore, in addition to the more important consequences it involved, may be considered as highly auspicious to English

literature : for his influence with his cotemporaries, arising from his talents and pre-eminent learning, aided by the contagious nature of the sentiments he was ambitious to disseminate, greatly contributed to give diffusion to that *fashion* in the use of the English, which had already begun to prevail, and which was subsequently established by the exertions of Chaucer and Gower. Another circumstance which tended to give currency to the national dialect, was that Edward III. regarding the Norman tongue as a badge of conquest, abolished it in the public acts and judicial proceedings, and substituted the language of his country.

Wicliffe surpassed all the learned men of his age in extent and variety of knowledge. Indeed, his great learning and general superiority were allowed even by his enemies. He was eminently skilled in all the logical subtleties of the schools, and as a disputant was unrivalled. He had a profound knowledge of the civil and canon law, as well as of our own municipal laws. But his studies were more particularly directed to theological learning; and he not only translated the scriptures into English, but wrote notes, expositions, and homilies, upon various parts of them. His character was marked by

piety, benevolence, and ardent zeal; to which was added, great gravity, and even austerity of manners, befitting the first champion of religious liberty.

After his death, his followers, by way of reproach, were stiled *Lollards**.

It is not easy to know what were the opinions of Wicliffe on some important points, as they appear to have fluctuated in several particulars, as is usual in the pursuit of truth; and in a few instances were evidently modified by his various persecutions. But his opinions in the



* The term Lollard, according to the canonist Lyndwood, is derived from the Latin word *lolium*, which signifies a cockle; because that weed is injurious to the corn, among which it grows; *infelix lolium*.—Georg. Thus the Lollards, if we are to believe the Catholics, corrupted and injured the good intentions of those with whom they had intercourse. To this derivation of the word, Chaucer alludes in the following lines:

This Lollar here woll preache us somewhat,
He wolde sowin some difficultie,
Or spring in some cockle in our clene corn.

Squire's Prologue.

Others derive the name from one Walter Lolhard, a German. *Beausobre Dissert. sur Adamites, &c.* Others, again, from Lullard, or Lollards, the praises of God; a sect so named, which was dispersed through Brabant. *Pictete Oration.* [See Lewis's Life of Reynold Pecocke.]

main, derived from his examination of the scriptures, and his researches into ecclesiastical antiquity, resembled those of the reformers of the 16th century: though in some points he went even further than they. In addition to the sentiments contained in the above extracts, he maintained that the clergy ought to possess no estates; that the numerous ceremonies of the church of Rome, are injurious to true piety; that oaths are unlawful; and what is very remarkable, that the church is dependent on the state, and ought to be reformed by it. Yet, after all his innovations, it must be allowed that his sentiments are deeply coloured by the superstition of his age. He was an advocate for the Calvinistic doctrines of grace, predestination, &c. &c.

But it were unjust to try Wicliffe by the test which would be proper for a public character of modern times. We must consider the age in which he lived—oppressed and enslaved by the baleful superstition of the Romish church, and still overshadowed by the thick darkness spread over the nations since the irruption of the Gothic barbarians—and we shall acknowledge, that his services to mankind were incalculable. In respect of the two points, 1. Of op-

position to the friars, 2. Of those particular encroachments of the pope, by which he superseded the ecclesiastical constitution of every country, disposing at his pleasure of benefices and dignities throughout Christendom—Wicliffe had precursors in St. Amour, Fitzralph archbishop of Armagh, and Grostete bishop of Lincoln. But he was the first to throw off the trammels of implicit faith, and to teach his countrymen and the world, to judge for themselves; and his unwearied exertions sowed the seeds of that auspicious revolution in religion, which, about a century and half after, arrived at full maturity. His design was to produce a revolution in the morals as well as in the religion of mankind; and he has the glory of giving an impulse to the soul, which will progressively augment to the end of time.

Should it be thought that I dwell too long upon a writer so antiquated, and whose works are not likely even to be consulted, except by the curious, I would beg leave to observe, that to those who delight to contemplate the progress of the human species in knowledge and refinement, nothing will be uninteresting in the character and conduct of those who have taken the first steps in this important process, how-

ever low those steps may be placed in the imaginary scale of perfection. In all stages of society, those unquestionably deserve the highest praise, who outstep the rest of their contemporaries ; who rise up in solitary majesty amidst a host of prejudices and errors, combating intrepidly on one side, though assailed and weakened on another. The merit consists in setting the example ; in exhibiting a pattern after which others may work. It is easy to follow, when there is one to lead ; but to be the first to strike out into a new and untried way, in whatever state of society it may be found, marks a genius above the common order. Such men are entitled to everlasting gratitude.

CHAUCER.

WE come now to the renowned poet and eminent scholar *GEOFFREY CHAUCER*; and as the recorded particulars of his life are not numerous, and are besides of a description calculated to illustrate the manners of the age, I shall give them at some length; premising, that the account is borrowed almost exclusively from *Mr. Godwin's* late work.

Chaucer, from the original inscription on his tomb-stone, died in 1400, aged 72. He was therefore born in 1328; and himself has informed us that his birth-place was London. His father was probably a merchant. In his "*Court of Love*," a poem which he published at the age of eighteen, he speaks of himself as "*Philogenet of Cambridge, Clerk*;" hence it may be presumed, that he passed some of the later years of his education at that university; though it is affirmed on the authority of *Leland*, and likewise inferred from some collateral evidence, that he afterwards removed to *Oxford*.

After leaving this university, he spent several years in France, where he became complete master of the language and literature of the country. His residence in Paris was some time between the years 1347 and 1355.—On his return to England, he entered as student of the Inner Temple. This is affirmed by Leland, and is likewise inferred from the authority of a record mentioned by Speght, in his *Life of Chaucer*, as seen by one Master Buckley; which states, that “Geoffrey Chaucer was fined two shillings for beating a Franciscan friar in Fleet-street.” It does not appear, however, that he ever practised the law.

From the 30th year of his age, Chaucer was a courtier—a distinction which he owed to his poetical talents. As early as the year 1359, he had a house assigned him by his sovereign, at Woodstock, where he spent the greater part of his life. From his connection with the court, it is not improbable that he had some share in the education of the young duke of Lancaster, who subsequently became his constant friend and patron.

In the year 1359, he accompanied the expedition of Edward III. to France; a fact which is concluded from the circumstance of his be-

ing examined as a witness in a cause of arms depending in the Court Military, between sir Richard le Scrope and sir Robert Grovenor, in 1386, and his deposing, that he had already "borne arms twenty-seven years." He closed his military career, however, with the peace of Bretigni, the year following.

In 1367, he obtained from Edward III. by the title of *Valettus hospitii*, an annual pension, for life, of twenty marks, for services performed, or to be performed; or till the king should otherwise dispose of him, as expressed in the grant. This was his first pecuniary favour from the court, which (estimated at eighteen times the value,) is equivalent to 240l. of our money.

In the year 1370, he was married to Philippa Rouet, or more probably Philippa Pycard de Rouet, and sister of Blanche, wife of the duke of Lancaster. The same year he was sent on a special mission to France, the object of which is unknown; and three years after was associated with sir James Pronan, vice-admiral of the Genoese auxiliaries, and John de Mari, a citizen of Genoa, in an embassy to that republic, for the purpose of agreeing upon some town or spot, on the sea coast of our island, at

which the Genoese might establish a regular factory. After having discharged his commission, he made the tour of the northern states of Italy, and visited Petrarca, who read to him his version of the tale of Grisildis, of which Chaucer took a copy. Petrarca also introduced him to an acquaintance with the works of Boccaccio, and did not survive his interview with the British bard more than a twelve-month.

Chaucer, on his return the following year, received a grant of a pitcher of wine *per diem*, to be delivered daily in the port of the city of London, by the king's chief butler, during the term of his natural life. The pitcher here mentioned is supposed equal to a modern gallon, and the annual value of the wine about 10*l.* equal in modern money to 180*l.* About six weeks after, he was appointed comptroller of the duties of customs in the port of London; but in consequence of the intrigues and convulsions of the reign of Richard II. he forfeited this office.

The next year, the wardship of Edmund Staplegate, a minor, was conferred upon him by the crown. This was a grant of some importance, as it committed to him the custody of

all the estates which devolved to his ward by the death of his father ; together with his *maritagium*, or the fee paid by a tenant holding immediately from the crown, for the royal consent, in case he married while a minor. Such wardships, by the feudal institutions, belonging to the crown, were often conferred by the king as boons on his principal favourites. The heir finally redeemed the rights conferred on Chaucer, for the sum of 104l. equal to 1,872l. sterling.

The next favour conferred upon him was a grant of contraband wool, forfeited to the crown, in value 71l. 4s. 6d. equal to 1,262l. 1s. of modern money. In 1377, Chaucer, in conjunction with sir Guichard Dangle, and sir Richard Stan, or Sturry, was appointed a commissioner for treating of the marriage of Richard prince of Wales, with a daughter of Charles V. both being children of about ten years of age ; but the treaty failed.

The day after the death of Edward III. in 1378, Chaucer obtained, through the interest of John of Gaunt, the renewal of the grant of the office of comptroller of the customs. His pension was also renewed, under the new king, as likewise a grant of twenty marks *per annum*, in

compensation of the patent of Edward III. entitling him to a pitcher of wine daily. Moreover, the office of comptroller of small customs in the same port was conferred upon him in 1382; a boon which is supposed to have been obtained at the request of Ann of Bohemia, and to have been the pledge by which she engaged him in her service, and constituted him her poet.

In the year 1384, there was a contention between the city and the court, respecting the election of a mayor, which the latter had been accustomed despotically to impose upon the citizens, in disregard of their election. This seems to have been part of a plot to ruin John of Gaunt; and Chaucer, from attachment to his patron, as well as from a sense of duty, warmly defended the citizens against the court; but unable to prevail, he was constrained to fly his country to save his life. He repaired first to Hainault, and afterwards to the province of Zealand, where he seems to have fixed his principal residence. Here he met with several of his countrymen who had been involved in the late disturbances; and as his finances were in a better condition than theirs, he generously and liberally supplied their wants.

His generosity on this occasion, added to the perfidy of his friends in England, who, deserting him, withheld fresh supplies, soon exhausted his resources, and he was forced to return to England, after an absence of about two years. He was scarcely arrived, when he was arrested, and committed prisoner, as is supposed, to the Tower.

During his imprisonment, he was deprived of both his offices of comptroller of the customs in the port of London, and of comptroller of the small customs. He even appears to have suffered great pecuniary distress at this time: for he obtained, in 1388, a patent permitting him to resign the two pensions of twenty marks each, being all that now remained to him of the bounty of the crown, and which he probably exchanged for money to supply his urgent wants.

Chaucer was set at liberty in 1389, probably through the interposition of the queen; though on conditions, the acceptance of which has fixed the principal stain upon his character. As the price of his enlargement, he was required to make an ample confession of what were called his misdemeanors, and to impeach his former associates. To this proposal he con-

sented, and as he says himself, in his "Testament of Love," offered to prove the truth of his information, according to the custom of the times, by entering the lists with the parties accused. It is but just to acknowledge, that his conduct in this affair, though far from honourable, will nevertheless admit of considerable extenuation. It should be recollected that his former friends, by embezzling his income, and cutting off his resources when abroad, had plotted to starve him. He was not influenced, therefore, simply by the overtures of the court, but stimulated by a natural resentment against treatment thus inhuman. Still the information in question brought upon him a load of ill will, and the charge of being false, lying, base, and ungrateful.

The same year, he received the appointment of clerk of the king's works, in lieu of that of comptroller of the duties of customs. This office related to the erection, repair, and embellishment of the king's mansions, parks, and domains ; and among our national records is still to be seen a commission addressed to him, of the date of the 12th of July, 1390, for work to be done at St. George's chapel, in the castle of Windsor. The salary attached to this

employment, was 2s. per day, or 36l. 10s. *per annum*; in modern money 657l.

At the age of 63, he resigned his office of clerk of the works, after having enjoyed it about twenty months, and retired to a private station; (probably to his house at Woodstock,) as in the conclusions of the *Astrolabie*, in which there is the date of the 12th of March, 1391, he says, "sufficient for our orizont compounded after the latitude of Oxenford."

After he had been engaged about a twelve-month in the composition of his *Canterbury Tales*, he found himself under the necessity, in 1394, of applying to the crown for some increase of resources; and was granted a pension of 20l. (in modern money 360l.) *per annum*, for the remainder of his life. Two years after, John of Gaunt publicly espoused Catherine, lady Swinford, the sister of Chaucer's wife, with whom he had cohabited twenty years. Chaucer thus became connected in family with his illustrious friend and patron, who purchased and bestowed upon him the estate of Donnington castle, near Newbury, in the county of Berks.

After seven years' retirement, we find him again engaged in public affairs; though the

precise nature of his office we are left to conjecture from the description of "a great variety of arduous and urgent political transactions, to be performed and expedited by Chaucer, as well in presence as absence of the king, in various parts of the realm." It seems, that in the execution of this office, he was liable to be disquieted, molested, or impeded by certain persons his competitors, and vexed with suits, complaints, and hostility;" and to prevent which, a patent of protection was granted him, in 1398, by Richard II.

In the autumn of the same year, he received a grant of a tun of wine yearly, to be delivered to him by the king's chief butler, in the port of London. At this time, he had probably retired again to Donnington castle.

On the usurpation of Henry of Bolingbroke, by the title of Henry IV. Chaucer had his former grants confirmed to him, and also obtained an additional grant of 40 marks *per annum*; also, his son Thomas was made chief butler to the household, and speaker of the house of commons. In the last year of his life he came to London, where he died the 25th of Oct. 1400.

Chaucer's fame with posterity rests securely

on the merit of his poetical compositions. His prose productions are neither numerous, nor of much importance.

The Testament of Love, his longest work, was written while he was prisoner in the Tower, after he had delivered in his confession, and before he was liberated; or about the month of June, 1389. His chief design in this work, was to remove the odium, not to say calumnies, cast upon his character by his desertion and impeachment of his former associates. In his youth, he had translated Boethius *De Consolatione Philosophiæ*, a work which had been composed by the author, while he also was state prisoner, under the reign of Theodoric, king of the Goths. There was some resemblance in the fate of Chaucer, to that of the illustrious Roman—a resemblance which he seems to have contemplated with a gloomy satisfaction.

The work is divided into three books, and is conceived in allegory. It consists principally of a dialogue between the Prisoner and Love, who visits him in his cell, as Philosophy visited the prison of Boethius, and is chiefly interesting, as we are enabled to trace in it the anxious workings of the author's feelings in re-

gard to his unknown destiny, and as it exhibits a pleasing proof of the resources he found within himself in the midst of calamity; though it is by no means remarkable for exhibiting an example of mind superior to events. The style is mystical and obscure, conformably to the taste of the age in which he lived. The following specimen is taken from the first book, and is probably as favourable a one as could be given:

Rehearsing these things and many other, without time or moment of rest, me seemed for anguish of disease, that altogether I was ravished, I cannot tell how, but wholly all my passions and feelings weren lost, as it seemed for the time, and suddenly a manner of dread, light in me all at once, *naught*¹ such fear as folk have of an enemy, that were mighty, and would *hem*² grieve, or dooen *hem* disease: for I trow this is well know to many persons, that *othcrwhile* *if*³ a man be in his sovereign's presence, a manner of *ferdnesse*⁴ creepeth in his heart, not for harm, but of goodly subjection: namely, as men readen that angels been *aferde*⁵ of our Saviour in heaven. And *parde*⁶ there *ne* is, *ne* may no passion of disease be, but it is to mean that angels been *adradd*⁷, not by

¹ not.² them.³ if at any time.⁴ fear, dread.⁵ afraid.⁶ perhaps. ⁷ afraid.

friends of dread, *sithen* they been perfectly blessed, as affection of wonderfulness, and by service of obedience; such *ferde*¹ also *han* these lovers in presence of their loves, and subjects, *aforme*² their sovereigns. Right so with *ferdnesse*, mine heart was caught. And I suddenly *astonied*³ there entered into the place *there*⁴ I was lodged, a lady, the *seemliche*⁵ and most goodly to my sight, that ever *toforne*⁶ appeared to any creature; and truly in the *blustering* of her look, she gave gladness and comfort suddenly to all my wits; and right so she doeth to every wight that cometh in her presence. And for she was so goodly (as methought) mine heart began some deal to be embolded, and next a little hardy to speak; but yet with a quaking voice, as I durst, I salued her, and enquired what she was, and why she, so worthy to sight, deigned to enter into so foul a dungeon, and namely a prison, without leave of my keepers. For *certes*⁷, although the virtue of deeds of mercy, stretchen to visiten the poor prisoners, and *hem* after that faculties been had to comfort, me seemed that I was so *ferre* fallen into misery and wretched hid *caitiffness*⁸, that me should no precious thing *neigh*⁹; and also that for sorrow every wight should been heavy, and wish my recovery.

¹ fear.² before.³ astonished.⁴ for where.⁵ the most beautiful.⁶ before.⁷ certainly⁸ meanness.⁹ approach.

But when this lady had some deal apperceived, as well by my words, as by my cheer, what thought busied me within—with a good womanly countenance, she said these words: O my *norie*¹, weenest thou that my manner be to *foryet*² my friends, or my servants? Nay, (quod she,) it is my full intent to visit and comfort all my friendships and allies, as well in time of perturbation, as of most property of bliss; in me shall unkindness never be founden. And also *sithen* I have so few especial true, now in these days, wherefore I may well at more leisure, come to *hem* that me deserven, and if my coming may in any thing avail, *wete*³ well, I *woll*⁴ come often.

Now good lady (quod I,) that art so fair on to look, raining honey by thy words; bliss of Paradise *arne*⁵ thy lookings, joy and comfort are thy movings. What is thy name? How is it that in you is so *mokell*⁶ working virtues *enpight*⁷, as me seemeth, and in none other creature, that ever saw I with mine eyen. My disciple, (quod she,) me wondereth of thy words, and on thee, that for a little disease has *for-yeten* my name. *Wost*⁸ thou not well that I am Love, that first thee brought to thy service? O good lady, (quod I,) is this worship to thee, or to thine ex-

¹ foster-child. ² forget. ³ know.

⁴ will. ⁵ are. ⁶ much.

⁷ infixed, inherent.—from *pike*, Sax. to pitch.

⁸ knowest.

cellence; to come into so foul a place? *Parde* sometime tho' I was in prosperity, and with foreign good¹ involved, I had *mokil* to doen to draw thee to my *hostel*²; and yet many warnings thou madest, ere thou list fully to grant thine home to make at my dwelling place. And now thou comest goodly by thine own *vise*³, to comfort me with words, and so therethrough I gin remember on passed gladness. Truly, lady, I *ne wot*, whether I shall say welcome or *none*⁴; *sithen* thy coming *woll* as much do me *tene*⁵ and sorrow, as gladness and mirth. See why: for that me comforteth to think on passed gladness that me anoyeth *eft*⁶ to be in doing. Thus thy coming both gladdeth and *teneth*, and that in cause of much sorrow. Lo! lady, how then I am comforted by your coming! And with that I gan in tears to distil, and tenderly weep. Now, *certes* (quod Love,) I see well (and that me overthinketh,) that wit in thee faileth, and art in point to doat. Truly (quod I,) that have ye maked, and that ever *woll* I rue. *Wottest* thou not well (quod she,) that every shepherd ought by reason, to seek his *sperkeland*⁶ sheep that *arne* run into wilderness, among bushes and perils, and *hem* to their pasture *ayen*⁷ bring, and take on *hem* privy busy cure of keeping? And tho' the

¹ house.² advice, accord.³ no, not.⁴ grief.⁵ oft⁶ scattered.⁷ again.

uncunning sheep scattered would been lost, *renning*¹ to wilderness, and to deserts draw, or else woulden put *hemself* to the swallowing wolf; yet shall *tho* shepherd, by business and travail, so put him forth, that he shall not let *hem* be lost by no way. A good shepherd putteth rather his life to been lost for his sheep.

But, for thou shalt not *wene*² me, being of worse condition, truly for *everich* of my folk, and for all *tho* that to me ward, be knit in any condition, I *woll* rather die than suffer *hem* through error to been *spilt*³. For me list, and it me liketh, of all mine a shepherdess to be *cleaped*.

The Parson's Tale concludes the celebrated collection of "The Canterbury Tales,"—productions to which Chaucer is principally indebted for his fame as a poet and a scholar. The parson is introduced in a very appropriate manner, inveighing against the vices of the age; whence we collect some particulars with respect to its manners and usages.

Alas! may not a man see as in our days, the sinful

¹ running

² think.

³ lost.

costlew¹ array of clothing, and namely, in too much superfluity, or else into disordinate scantness.

As to the first sin in superfluity of clothing, such that maketh it so dear, to the harm of the people, *nat²* only the cost of enbraudering, the disguised *en-denting*, or *barning*, *ounding³*, *paling*, *winding*, or *bending*, and semblable waste of cloth in vanity. But there is also the *costlewe* furring in *her* gowns, so much *pounsing⁴* of *chesell⁵* to make holes, so much *dagging⁶* of sheers forche, with the superfluity in length of the foresaid gownes trailing in the dung and in the mire, on horse and also on foot, as well of man as of woman. That all that trailing is verily as in effect wasted, consumed, threadbare, and rotten with dung, rather than it is *yere⁷* to the poor, to great dommage of the foresaid poor folk, and that in sundry wise, this is to say, that the more the cloth is wasted, the more must it cost to the poor people for the scarceness. And moreover, if so be that they would *yere* such *pounced* and *dagged* clothing to the poor people, it is not convenient to wear for *her* estate, *ne* sufficient to *her* necessity, to keep *hem* from the distemperance of the firmament. * * * * *

Now as to the outrageous array of women, God *wot*, that though the visages of some of *hem* seem full chaste and debonair, yet notify in her array or attire,

costly. ² not. ³ guarding, like waves.

⁴ punching with a bodkin. ⁵ chissel, bodkin.

⁶ slitting, cutting into slips. ⁷ given.

*licorousness*¹ and pride. I say not that honesty in clothing of man or woman is *uncovenable*²; but *certes* the superfluity of disordinate quantity of clothing is reprovab^{le}. Also the sin of ornament or of apparel, is in things that appertain to riding, as in company, delicate horses that *ben* holden for delight, that been so fair, fat and *costlewe*, and also in many a nice *knave*³ that is sustained because of *hem*, in curious harness, as in saddle, cruppers, *peitrels*⁴, and bridles, covered with precious clothing, and rich bars of plates of gold and of silver. For which God saith by Zacharie, the prophet, I *woll* confound the riders of such horses. Those folk take little regard of the riding of God's Son of heaven, and of his harness, when he rode upon the ass, and had none other harness but the poor clothes of his disciples; *ne* we read not that ever he rode on other beast. I speak this for the sin of superfluity, and not for reasonable honesty, when reason it requireth. * * * * *

Pride of the table appeareth also full *oft*: for *certes*, rich men be called to feasts, and poor folk been put away, and rebuked. And also in excess of divers meats and drinks, and namely such manner bake meats and dish meats, *brenning*⁵ of wild fire: painted and castled with paper, and semblable waste, so that

¹ licorishness.

² unbecoming.

³ a male, a servant, a lacquey.

⁴ breast-plates for horses.

⁵ burning.

it is abusion to think. And also into great preciousness of vessels, and curiosity of minstrelsy, by which a man is stirred more to *delices*¹ of lechery; if so be that he set his heart the less upon our Lord Jesu Christ, certainly it is a sin. And certainly the *delices* might be so great in this case, that a man might lightly fall by *hem* into a deadly sin.

I think it needless to give any extract from the "Conclusions of the Astrolabie," as there can obviously be little to interest the general reader in directions for the application of an astronomical instrument. It was drawn up for the benefit of "little Louis," his son, a youth of ten years of age.

Caxton stiles Chaucer "the worshipful father and first founder and embellisher of ornate eloquence in our English." And Mr. Godwin observes, that "he fixed and naturalized the genuine art of poetry in our island. But what (says he,) is most memorable in his eulogy, is, that he is the father of our language, the idiom of which was, by the Norman conquest, ba-

¹ delights.

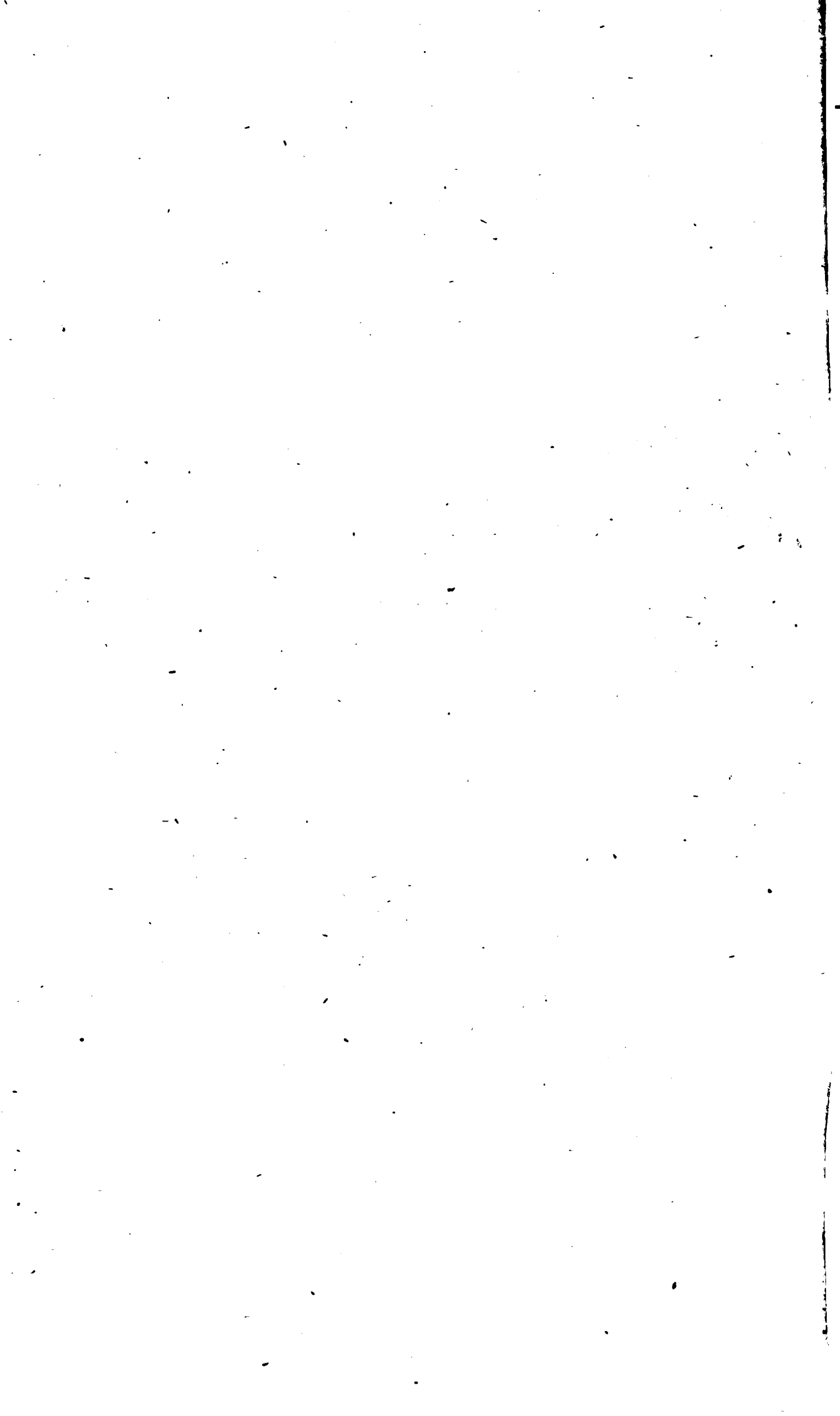
nished from courts and civilized life, and which Chaucer was the first to restore to literature and the muses. No one man, in the history of human intellect, ever did more than was effected by the single mind of Chaucer." And again: "Mandeville, Wicliffe, and Gower, whom we may style the other three evangelists of our tongue, though all elder in birth than Chaucer, did not begin so early to work upon the ore of their native language. He surprised his countrymen with a poem eminently idiomatic, clear, and perspicuous in its style, as well as rich and harmonious in its versification."

The principal foreign source whence Chaucer derived his materials for the improvement of his native tongue, was the Provençal, or Provencial, in his time the most polished language of Europe. From his intimate acquaintance with the romantic literature of the Provencial poets, he was enabled to transfuse into his own vernacular dialect their terms and phrases. It is thus that all languages are at first nourished and brought to maturity. In the infancy of language and of literature in any country, that is, before nations are become acquainted with the methods and habits of think-

ing, writers can in no way perhaps be so profitably employed, as in translation ; or in borrowing and naturalizing the ideas of more learned and polished nations, by which the general progress of improvement is rendered more easy and more rapid. But the writings and genius of Chaucer, with the obligations which our language and literature owe to him, have been so fully illustrated by Mr. Tyrwhit, in his edition of the " Canterbury Tales," and more recently by Mr. Godwin, as to render it superfluous for me to dwell longer upon his article in this place.

In the reigns of Henry IV. and V. which intervene between those of Richard II. and Henry VI. I have not found any literary production of sufficient importance to induce me to preserve the continuity in the succession of British Monarchs. The author treated of in the following article, had begun, indeed, to flourish in both of those reigns; but as the date of the production, whence my selections are taken, is later, he is more properly arranged, where he is now found.

Henry VI.



REYNOLD PECOCK.

THIS prelate is said to have been born somewhere in Wales, which, however, is inferred only from the circumstance of his having been a presbyter of the diocese of St. David's. Of his parentage, as well as of the exact place and time of his birth, we are ignorant; but as he is supposed to have died about the year 1460, at the age of 70, his birth will fall about the year 1390.

He was educated at Oriel College, Oxford, where he particularly applied himself to rhetoric and moral philosophy, though it is said, chiefly with the view of rendering them subservient to the study of theology. He became fellow of Oriel, in 1417, and in 1420, was ordained deacon and priest. In 1425, he took his bachelor's degree, and quitted the university. His reputation for learning and eloquence, now recommended him to the notice of Humphry, duke of Gloucester, then protector of the kingdom, who invited him to

court; in which situation, he added greatly to his fortunes and consideration. In 1431, he was made master of the college of St. Spirit and St. Mary, in London, founded a little before by sir Richard Whittington.

About this time he commenced his examination of the celebrated controversy between the Catholics and Lollards, which occupied the larger portion of his time and talents, for the space of 20 years. In 1444, he was promoted to the bishopric of St. Asaph, and took his degree of doctor of divinity. From St. Asaph, he was translated, in 1449, to the bishopric of Chichester.

In the period in which Pecock lived, the dispute between the papists and Wicliffites ran high, concerning the superior antiquity of their respective tenets; as well as on various other points of doctrine. Wicliffe, as we have seen, was a powerful antagonist to popish superstition. Pecock, though a sincere advocate of popery, discovered on all occasions a wish to accommodate. He was a candid and moderate, and at the same time an able opponent of the Wicliffites, whom he zealously endeavoured to reconcile to the catholic church; and strange as it may appear, he had the hope

of being able to accomplish this by bringing the points in dispute to the test of reason. With this view, he found himself under the necessity of making many important concessions. In particular, he allowed, that priests were fallible men; and consequently, might be mistaken. But the *shibboleth* of a true churchman, in those times, was, his insisting on the authority of the church, and the infallibility of its decisions. Hence, those concessions, instead of being ratified by the catholics, excited their implacable rancour. For his attempt to reclaim dissenters, he was represented as encouraging them; was reproached as a heretic, and treated as an enemy to that church, which he sincerely and strenuously laboured to defend. Unfortunately, the good bishop wanted firmness; and he was terrified by persecution, into a dishonourable abjuration of those opinions, which he believed to be true. But the machinations of his enemies did not end here. In 1458, he was deprived of his bishopric, and confined in the abbey of Thorney, in the isle of Thorney, in Cambridgeshire, and denied the use of pen, ink, and paper; and of all books, except a Bible, and a few books of devotion.

In this situation he wasted the inconsiderable remnant of his life.

Since, according to the bishop's own account, he spent more than twenty years in writing controversial books against the Lollards, his publications are too numerous to admit even of a catalogue in this place. Those who have the curiosity to know their titles, with a concise account of each, may consult his *Life*, written by Lewis, chap. 7. He wrote many volumes, both in Latin and English. No less than fourteen, three in folio, and eleven in quarto, were burnt at St. Paul's, as containing heretical doctrines. I shall make particular mention only of two; from the first of which I shall select my extracts. This book, entitled "*The Repressor*," contains a defence of the catholic clergy, against the objections of the Wicliffites, and was published in 1449. The plan of it shall be given in the bishop's own words :

I shall (says he,) justify eleven governancies of the clergy, which some of the common people unwisely and untruely judgen and condemnen to be evil. Of which eleven governancies, one is, the having and using of images in churches; and ano-

ther is, pilgrimage in going to the memorials, or the mind-places of saints, and that pilgrimages and offerings *mowe*¹ be done well, not only so of laymen, but rather of priests and of bishops. And this shall I do by writing of this present book in the common people's language, plainly and openly and shortly, and to be *cleped* "The Repressing," &c. And *he* shall have five principal parts. In the first of which parts shall be made, in general manner, the said repressing; and in general manner proof to the eleven said governancies. And in the ii. iii. iv. and v. parts, shall be made, in special manner, the said repressing, and in special manner the proof of the same eleven governancies.



In the first part of this work, he attacks the main principle of the *Over-blamers*, or, as he afterwards calls them, the *Bible-men*, "which holden them so wise by the Bible alone." According to the bishop, some of these maintained that "no governance is to be holden of christian men, the service or the law of God, save it which is grounded in holy scripture of the New Testament." Whereas, others of them affirmed that "no governance is to be

held or accounted of Christian men, the service or the law of God, save it which is grounded in the New Testament, or in the Old, and is not by the New Testament revoked." The Bible-men carried their notions of the sufficiency of the scriptures to an extravagant height, from their opposition to the Romanists, who asserted that the authority of the church is equal to that of sacred writ. The followers of Wicliffe had allowed "that men might accept man's law and ordinances when they were grounded in *holy scripture* or *good reason*, or were for the common profit of Christian people." The bishop contends, and indeed with great reason, that the Bible-men, in departing from that principle, had run into a dangerous error. His own words are :

First, It *longeth*¹ not to holy scripture, neither it is *his* office into which God hath *him* ordained, neither it is *his* part for to ground any governance or deed, or service of God, or any law of God, or any truth which man's reason by nature may find, learn, and know.

1. Scripture (he contends,) does not contain all that is necessary for the grounding of moral virtues, and therefore is not properly the foundation on which

¹ *belongeth*.

they stand. There may nothing be fundament or ground of a wall, or of a tree, or of an house, save it upon which the all whole substance of the wall, or of the tree, or of the house standeth, and out of which only the wall, tree, or house cometh.

2. All the learning and knowing which holy scripture giveth upon any beforesaid governance, deed, or truth of God's moral law, may be had by *doom*¹ of natural reason, *ghe*² though holy writ had not spoken thereof, &c.

3. The moral law, or judgment of natural reason was, when neither of the New, neither of the Old Testament the writing was, and that *fro* the time of Adam, &c.

4. For *he* [the scripture] biddeth a man to be meek, and *he* teacheth not before what meekness is; *he* biddeth a man to be patient, and yet *he* not before teacheth what patience is; and so forth of each virtue of God's law. Wherefore, no such said governance or virtue or truth, is to be said grounded in holy scripture, no more than it ought be said if a bishop would send a *pistle* or a letter to people of his diocese, and therein would remember *hem*, exhort *hem*, and stir *hem*, and bid *hem*, or counsel *hem*, for to keep certain moral virtues, &c.

The conclusion of his fifth argument is cu-

¹ judgment, decision.

² yea.

rious, from its description of an old custom in the city of London, on Midsummer-eve, prevalent in the bishop's time.

5. Say to me, good sir, and answer hereto ; when men of the country upland bringen into London in Mydsummer-eve*, branches of trees *fro* Bishop's Wood, and flowers *fro* the field, and betaken *tho* to citizens of London, for to therewith array *her* houses, shoul-den men of London receiving and taking *tho* branches and flowers, say and hold that *tho* branches grewen out of the carts which broughten *hem* to London, and that *tho* carts, or the hands of the bringers, weren grounds and fundaments of *tho* branches and flowers? God forbid so little wit be in *her* heads. *Certes*, though Christ and his apostles weren now living at London, and would bring so as is now said branches *fro* Bishop's Wood, and flowers *fro* the fields into London, and woulden *hem* deliver to men, that they make therewith *her* houses gay, into remembrance of St John Baptist, and of this that it was prophecied of him, that many shoul-den joy in his birth ; yet though men of London, receiving so *tho* branches and flowers, oughten not say and feel, that

* At this period, on Midsummer night, a watch was kept in London, on purpose to prevent the disorders of the rabble ; and was discontinued by the 20th of Henry VIII. and the custom abolished.—*Hall's Chro.* fol. 181.

tho branches and flowers grewen out of Christ's hands—*tho* branches grewen out of the boughs upon which they in Bishop's Wood stood, and *tho* boughs grewen out of stocks or trunchons, and the trunchons or shafts grewen out of the root, and the root out of the next earth thereto, upon which and in which the root is buried. So that neither the cart, neither the hands of the bringers, neither *tho* bringers *ben* the grounds or fundaments of *tho* branches.

6. The second principal conclusion and truth is this:—Though it pertain not to holy scripture, for to ground any natural or moral governance of truth, into whose finding, learning, and knowing, man's reason may by himself and by natural help come, as it is open now before; yet it may pertain well enough to holy scripture, that he rehearse such now said governancies and truths, and that he witness *hem* as grounded somewhere *else*¹ in the law of *kind*², or *doom*³ of man's reason.

7. The third principal conclusion is this:—The whole office and work into which God ordained holy scripture, is for to ground articles of faith, and for to rehearse and witness moral truths of law of *kind*, grounded in moral philosophy; that is to say, in *doom* of reason, that the readers be remembered,

¹ either.² nature.³ judgment.

stirred, and exhorted by so *miche*¹ the better, and the more, and the sooner for to fulfil them. Of which articles of faith, some *ben* not laws; as these—that God made heaven and earth in the beginning of time; and that Adam was the first man, and Eve was the first woman; and that Moses *lad* the people of Israel out of Egypt; and that Zacharia was father, and Elizabeth was mother of John Baptist; and that Christ fasted forty days; and so forth of many like. And some other *ben* laws; as that each man ought be baptized in water, if he may come thereto; and that each man ought to be *hosiled*², if he may come thereto.

8. The fourth principal conclusion:—It is not the office *longing* to moral law of *kind*, for to ground any article of faith, grounded by holy scripture. For why?—all that the now said moral law of *kind*, or moral philosophy, groundeth, is grounded by *doom* of man's reason; and therefore is such a truth and a conclusion, that in his finding, learning, and knowing, man's wit may, by itself alone, or by natural helps, without revelation *fro* God, rise and suffice.

* * * * *

9. The fifth principal conclusion:—Though neither the said moral law of *kind*, neither outward books thereof written, *mowe* ground any truth or conclusion

¹ much.

² *hosiled*, receive the Lord's supper.

of very faith; *git*¹ *tho* outward books, as Christian men *hcm* maken, *mowe* well ynow, rehearse, and witness truths and conclusions of faith, grounded before in holy scripture. For why?—it is no more repugnant, that books of moral philosophy rehearse truths and conclusions proper to the grounding of holy scripture, than that books of holy scripture rehearse truths and conclusions proper to the grounding of moral philosophy.

10. The sixth principal conclusion:—The whole office and work into which *ben* ordained the books of moral philosophy, written and made by Christian men, in the manner now before spoken, is to express outwardly, by virtue of pen and ink, the truths and conclusions which the inward book of law of *kind*, buried in man's soul and heart, groundeth; and for to rehearse some truths and conclusions of faith *longing* to the grounding of holy scripture, that the readers be the more and the ofter remembered, and stirred, and exhorted by this rehearsing, &c.

11. The seventh principal conclusion:—The more *deal* and *party*² of God's whole law to man in earth, and that by an huge great quantity over the remanent parts of the same law, is groupded sufficiently, out of holy scripture, in the inward book of law of *kind*, and of moral philosophy, and not in the book of holy scripture.

¹ yet.

² part.

12. The eighth principal conclusion:—No man may learn and *kunne* the whole law of God, to which Christian men *ben* bound, *but if* he *can* of moral philosophy; and the more that he *can* in moral philosophy, by so much the more he *can* of God's law and service. This conclusion followeth out of the seventh conclusion openly enough.

13. The ninth conclusion:—No man shoulde[n] perfectly, surely, and sufficiently understand holy scripture in all *tho* places wherein *he* reherseth moral virtues; *but if* he be before well, and perfectly, surely, and sufficiently learned in moral philosophy. This conclusion followeth out of the seventh and the eight conclusions.

14. The tenth conclusion:—The learning and *kunning* of the said law of *kind*, and of the said moral philosophy, is so necessary to Christian men, that it may not be lacked of them if they shoulde[n] perfectly serve to God, and keep his law *bitake*¹ to *hem* in earth.

15. The eleventh conclusion:—Full well oughten all persons of the lay-party, not *miche* learned in moral philosophy and law of *kind*, for to make *miche* of clerks well learned in moral philosophy, that *tho* clerks shoulde[n] help *tho* lay persons, for to aright understand holy scripture in all *tho* places in which holy scripture reherseth the before-spoken conclu-

¹ delivered.

sions and truths of moral philosophy ; that is to say, of law of *kind*. For why?—without *tho* clerks so learned in moral philosophy, and without *her* direction, the now said lay persons shoulde[n] not easily, *lightly* and anon, have the due understanding of holy scripture in the now said places.

16. The twelfth conclusion :—Full well oughten all persons of the lay-party, not learned *anywhere else*¹ by the now said clerks, or by other books of moral philosophy, for to make *mick* of books made to *hem* in *her* mother's language, which be cleped thus : The *Donet*² into Christian Religion ;—The *Follower to the Donet* ;—The *Book of Christian Religion*, namely, the first party fro the beginning of the third treaty forward ;—The *Book filling the Four Tables* ;—The *Book of Worshipping* ;—The book cleped The *Proroker of Christian Men* ;—The *Book of Counsels* ; and other *mo* pertaining to the now said book of Christian Religion.—Would God, men woulde[n] not be by so *mick* the forwarder, and the more presumptuous, that goodness is to *hem* thus proferred. Would God, that they woulde[n] assay perfectly what *tho* now said books *ben* ; and woulde[n] well *kunne hem*, and then if they should have any cause for to blame or commend those books, that then first, they would blame or commend.

17. The thirteenth conclusion :—They that would

¹ either.

² *Donet* implies introduction.

ask and say thus—"Where findest thou it grounded in holy scripture?" As tho' else it is not *worthly*¹ to be take for true, whenever any governance, or truth, sufficiently grounded in law of *kind*, and in moral philosophy, is affirmed and ministered to them; as *ben* many of *tho* eleven governancies and truths, which *schullen* be treated upon after, in this present book; which *ben* setting up of images in high places of the bodily church; pilgrimages done prively, and pilgrimages done openly, by laymen, and by priests, and by bishops, unto the memorials, or *mind-places* of saints; and the endowing of priests by rents and by unmoveable possessions, and such other. *Asken tho whilst*² in like manner unreasonably, and like unskilfully, and like reprovably, as if they would ask and say thus: "Where findest thou it grounded in holy scripture, when a truth and conclusion of grammar is affirmed, and said to them," &c.

The language in which this last conclusion is expressed, being involved, the sentiment intended to be conveyed, is somewhat obscure. He means to say, that to expect the authority of scripture for all moral truths (which species of truths is discoverable by reason,) were

¹ worthy.

² They ask at the same time.

equally absurd, as to expect a revelation to establish the rules of grammar.

It is remarkable, that in the foregoing *Conclusions* of bishop Pecock, a cast of thought is perceivable similar to that which pervades the Ecclesiastical Polity of Hooker, as will be seen when we come to treat of that celebrated book.

The other work I proposed to speak of is his "Treatise of Faith," which is a dialogue between a father and his son, divided into two books; of which the first professes to treat of the most probable means of gaining over the Lollards to the church; which he affirms to be an entire submission of their judgment to the decrees of the church, though supposed fallible; unless they could demonstrate such decrees to be founded in error. This book contains, perhaps, a still fuller developement of his religious opinions. In a long digression, he discusses the foundations of our faith; and allows that faith in this life, is only probable, or *opinional*, not *sciential*; which, he says, is to be obtained only in the bliss of heaven; and

that the truth of the Christian religion is not to be proved by demonstrative, but only by probable arguments. The book abounds in scholastic learning and logical subtleties, in both of which our author was a great proficient.

Reynold Pecock was evidently a man of strong parts, and of learning far superior to those of his time. He was not only skilled in all the subtleties of the logic and divinity of the schoolmen, but had studied with deep attention the law of nature and nations. He was at once acute and eloquent. But his talents were unhappily engaged in the hopeless attempt to defend the absurd doctrines and usages of the church of Rome, on the principles of reason. To his praise, however, be it said, that he always conducted his opposition with great moderation and candour. He patiently listened to the arguments of his antagonists, without replying to them, as was the custom with the rest of his order, with insult and outrage. This gentleness and forbearance towards heretics, (even more than his heretical opinions,) were the cause of his persecution. The following short prayer, composed by himself in English, as it exhibits a picture of the benignity and candour of his mind, deserves to be transcribed:

O thou Lord Jesu, God and man, head of thy Christian church, and teacher of Christian belief, I beseech thy mercy, thy pity, and thy charity; far be this said peril [of implicit faith] from the Christian church, and from each person therein contained; and shield thou, that this venom be never brought into thy church; and if thou suffer it to be any while brought in, I beseech thee, that it be soon again outspit; but suffer thou, ordain, and do, that the law and the faith, which thy chosen at any time keepeth, be received and admitted to fall under this examination—whether it be the same very faith which those of thine apostles taught or no, and whether it hath sufficient evidences for it to be very faith or no.

SIR JOHN FORTESCUE.

AN eminent lawyer and statesman, was descended from an ancient family in Devonshire, but neither the time nor place of his birth is precisely known. He is supposed to have been educated at Oxford, and bishop Tanner affirms him to have been of Exeter College, though these circumstances are also uncertain. That he was a student of Lincoln's Inn, however, is a fact better authenticated : for it is well known that he distinguished himself there by his knowledge of the civil and common law.

In the fourth year of Henry VI. or in 1426, he was made one of the governors of Lincoln's Inn, which honour was conferred upon him, a second time, three years after. In 1430, he was made a serjeant at law ; in 1441, a king's serjeant at law ; and the year after, chief justice of the king's bench. This office he held through the reign of Henry VI. to whom he steadily adhered in all his misfortunes. In

consequence of this attachment, in the first parliament under Edward IV. which began at Westminster, on the 4th of November, 1461, he was attainted of high treason, by the same act which likewise ordered the attainder of Henry VI. queen Margaret, and Edward, their son, with a number of other persons of distinction. On the flight of Henry into Scotland, it is generally believed, that he created Fortescue chancellor of England; and the latter, in his book *De Laudibus Legum Angliæ*, styles himself *Cancellarius Angliæ*.

In the April of 1463, he fled to Flanders, in company with queen Margaret, prince Edward, and other persons of rank, who followed the fortunes of the house of Lancaster. He continued exiled from his country during many years, moving from place to place, as the necessities of the royal family required; and finally returned with them to England, on a delusive prospect of retrieving their fortunes.

The time and other circumstances of his death are unknown; though it is certain he lived to the age of nearly ninety years, and probably died but a short time before the close of the 15th century.

His works are numerous, though two only, I

believe, have been printed. 1. His most celebrated production is the *De Laudibus Legum Angliæ*, before mentioned. It appears from the introduction, that his primary intention in writing this work, was to institute his young master, prince Edward, in the art of government, by instructing him in the laws of his country. He had observed the promising talents of that prince, who was eager to acquire expertness in all military exercises, with a view to accomplish himself for an able commander. He thought it of importance, therefore, to mingle with these laudable propensities, impressions of a different description, but of no less importance to a monarch. He was anxious to instil into his mind, just notions of the constitution of his country, and to inspire him with reverence for its laws; that (as he said,) if Providence should favour his designs, he might govern as a king, and not as a tyrant or conqueror. His honourable solicitude, however, proved fruitless, with respect to the object which called it forth; the young prince, not long after, having been inhumanly murdered. But the work itself still remains as a monument of the author's talents, and of his love for his country. This *eulogium* upon our

national laws, though received with high commendation by the professional men to whom it was communicated, was not published till the reign of Henry VIII. Several impressions have since appeared, with different titles. But the best editions are those in folio, Lond. 1732; and 1741, with a copious preface, annotations, and an accurate index.

2. "The difference between an absolute and limited Monarchy, as it more particularly regards the English Constitution; being a Treatise written by Sir John Fortescue, Kt. Lord Chief Justice and Lord High Chancellor of England, under King Henry VI.; faithfully transcribed from the MS. copy in the Bodleian Library, and collated with three other MSS. Published with some Remarks, by John Fortesque Aland, of the Inner Temple, Esq. F. R. S. Lond. 1714, 8vo."

The different effects resulting from an absolute and limited monarchy, which the author styles *Jus Regale* and *Jus Politicum et Regale*, is well illustrated by the difference of condition in the people of France and of England at the period of his writing.

Chap. iii.

And *how so be it*¹ that the French king reigneth upon his people *dominio regali*; yet St. Lewis, sometime king there, *ne* any of his progenitors set never *talys*², or other impositions upon the people of that land, without the assent of the three estates, which, when they may be assembled, are like to the court of parliament in England. And this order kept many of his successors till late days, that Englishmen made such a war in France, that the three estates durst not come together. And then for that cause, and for great necessity which the French king had of goods, for the defence of that land, he took upon him to set *talys* and other impositions upon the commons, without the assent of the three estates; but yet he would not set any such charges, nor hath set upon the nobles, for fear of rebellion. And because the commons, though they have grudged, have not rebelled, nor be hardy to rebel, the French kings have yearly *sithen* set such charges upon them, and so augmented the same charges, as the same commons be so impoverished and destroyed, that they may *un-**neth* live. They drink water, they eat apples, with bread right brown, made of rye. They eat no flesh, *but if* it be *selden*³, a little lard, or of the entrails, or heads of beasts, slain for the nobles and mer-

¹ notwithstanding.² tallies, taxes.³ seldom.

chants of the land. They wear no woollen, *but if* it be a poor coat, under their uttermost garment, made of great canvass, and passen not their knee. Wherefore, they be gartered and their thighs bare. Their wives and children *gone* bare-foot; they may in none otherwise live: for some of them, that was wont to pay to his lord for his tenement, which he hireth by the year, a *scute*¹, payeth now to the king over that *scute*, five *scutes*. *Wherethro'* they be *artyd*² by necessity, so to watch, labour, and grub in the ground for their sustenance, that their nature is much wasted, and the *kind* of them brought to nought. They *gone* crooked, and are feeble, not able to fight, nor to defend the realm; nor they have weapon, nor money to buy them weapon withal; but verily they live in the most extreme poverty and misery; and yet they dwell in one of the most fertile realm of the world. *Wherethro'* the French king hath not men of his own realm, able to defend it, except his nobles, which *beryn*³ not such impositions; and therefore, they are right likely of their bodies, by which cause the said king is compelled to make his armies, and and retinues for the defence of his land, of strangers, as Scots, Spaniards, *Arragonars*⁴, men of *Almayn*⁵, and of other nations; else, all his enemies might

¹ of the value of 3s. 4d. a French gold coin, the same with their *escuts* or *ecus d'or*, or gold crown piece.

² pressed, constrained. ³ bear. ⁴ Arragonians. ⁵ Germany.

overrun him : for he hath no defence of his own, except his castles and fortresses. Lo ! this the fruit of his *Jus Regale*. If the realm of England, which is an isle, and therefore might not lightly get succours of other lands, were ruled under such a law, and under such a prince, it would be then a prey to all other nations that would conquer, rot, and devour it ; which was well proved in the time of the Britons, when the Scots and the Picts so beat and oppressed this land, that the people thereof sought help of the Romans, to whom they had been tributary. And [as] they could not be defended by them, they sought help of the duke of Britany, then called Little Britain, and granted therefore, to make his brother Constantine, their king. And so he was made king here, and reigned many years, and his children after him, of which great Arthur was one of their issue. But blessed be God, this land is ruled under a better law ; and, therefore, the people thereof be not in such penury, nor thereby hurt in their persons ; but they be wealthy, and have all things necessary to the sustenance of nature. Wherefore they be mighty, and able to resist the adversaries of the realm, and to beat other realms, that do or will do them wrong. Lo ! this is the fruit of *Jus Politicum et Regale*, under which we live. Somewhat now I have shewed you of the fruits of both laws, *ut ex fructibus eorum, cognoscatis eos, &c.*

Chap. iv.

Hereafter is shewed how the Revenues of France be made great.

Sithen our king reigneth upon us by laws more favorable and good to us, than be laws by the which the French king ruleth his people, it is reason we be to him more good and more profitable than be the subjects of the French king unto him, which would seem that we be not, considering that his subjects yielden to him more in one year, than we do to our sovereign lord in two years, *how so be it*, they do so, *again*¹ their wills. Nevertheless, when it is considered, how a king's office standeth in two things, one to defend his realm *again* their enemies outward, by sword; another, that he defendeth his people *again* wrong doers inward, which the French king doth not; *sythen* he oppresseth them more himself, than would have done all the wrong doers of the realm, tho' they had had no king; and *sythen* it is a sin to give no meat, drink, clothing, or other alms, to them that have need, as shall be declared in the day of doom; how much a greater sin is it to take from the poor man, his meat, his drink, his clothing and all that he hath need of? Which verily doth the French king to many a thousand of his subjects, as is openly

¹ against.

before declared. Which thing, tho' it be coloured *per Jus Regale*, yet it is tyranny : for St. Thomas saith, when a king ruleth his realm only to his own profit, and not to the good of his subjects, he is a tyrant.

King *Harauld*¹ reigned upon the Jews, *Dominio Regali*; yet when he *sclough*² the children of Israel, he was in that a tyrant, tho' the laws sayen, *quod principi placuit, legis habet rigorem*. Wherefore Achab, which reigned upon the children of Israel, by like laws, and desired to have had Naboth, his subject's vineyard, would not by that law take it from him, but proffered him the value thereof. For these words said by the prophet, *prædic eis jus regis*, be not else to say but, *prædic eis potestatem regis*. Wherefore, as often as a king doth any thing *again* the law of God, or *again* the law of nature, he doth wrong, notwithstanding the said law declared by the prophet. And it is so, that the law of nature *woll* in this case, that the king should do to his subjects, as he would be done to himself, if he were a subject; which may not be, that he would be almost destroyed, as be the commons of France. Wherefore, albeit that the French king's revenues be by such means much greater than be the revenues which the king our sovereign lord hath of us, yet they be not goodly taken, and the might of his realm is near de-

¹ Herod.

² slew.

stroyed thereby. By which consideration I would not, that the king's revenues of this realm were made great by any such means; and yet of necessity they must be greater than they be at this day. And truly, it is very necessary, they be alway great; and that the king have abundantly, wherewith his estate may be honorably kept for right many causes; of which some shall now hereafter be remembered.



There is a MS. of this work in the Cotton Library, in the title of which it is said to be addressed to Henry VI. but there can be little question, from various passages contained in it, that it was written by the author, with a view to ingratiate himself with Edward IV. The Lancastrian party having failed of success on their return from the continent, as already noticed, Fortescue thought it expedient to make some specious apology for his attachment to that party; and actually wrote another book, with the express purpose of attempting a reconciliation with the victorious Edward IV. This work, though never published, had been seen by Selden, as he informs us in the preface to his edition of the *De Laudibus*, &c. It is for the honour of Sir John Fortescue, however, that notwithstanding the various changes in

his own fortune, and that of the bloody factions which then vexed this kingdom, that he never abandoned his old constitutional principles.—A second edition of the work, from which the reader has been presented with an extract, was published in 1719, 8vo.

Many, if not all of the MS. remains of sir John Fortescue, are still extant in libraries. The following titles will serve to shew us still more completely, what were the subjects which chiefly occupied his speculations and his pen :

1. *Opusculum de Naturâ Legis Naturæ, et de ejus Censurâ in Successione Regnorum supremorum.*
2. *Defensio Juris Domus Lancastriæ.* 3. Genealogy of the House of Lancaster. 4. Of the Title of the House of York. 5. *Genealogiæ Regum Scotiæ.* 6. A Dialogue between Understanding and Faith. 7. A Prayer-book, which savours much of the times we live in.

Mr. Fortescue Aland, the editor of “The Differences between an Absolute and Limited Monarchy,” speaks of his illustrious predecessor, in his preface to that work, in the following handsome manner: “All good men, (says he,) and lovers of the English constitution, speak of him with honour, and that he still lives in the opinions of all true Englishmen, in

as high esteem and reputation, as any judge that ever sat in Westminster Hall. He was a man acquainted with all sorts of learning, besides his knowledge in the law, in which he was exceeded by none ; as will appear by the many judgments he gave, when on the bench, in the year-book of Henry VI. His character, in history, is that of pious, loyal, and learned ; and he had the honour to be called the chief counsellor of the king. He was a great courtier, and yet a great lover of his country."

The works of Fortescue, contain many facts relative to some of the darkest periods of our history, together with various notices, interesting to the antiquarian. There can be no doubt, therefore, that several of his MSS. which are still extant, may be printed with advantage.

FENN'S LETTERS.

THESE original letters, (as we are informed in the title-page,) were written during the reigns of Henry VI. Edward IV. and Richard III. by various persons of rank or consequence; and contain many curious anecdotes relative to that turbulent and bloody, but hitherto dark period of our history. They were published in 1787; and are all duplicates: for in order to prevent any repulsive effect to the reader, from their antique appearance, the original letter, in all the peculiarities of the ancient orthography, is given on one page, and on the opposite, is the same letter, in the modern spelling, except only such words as are now become obsolete. Agreeably to my plan, I shall extract only the modernized copy.

The Copy of a notable Letter, written by the Duke of Suffolk, to his Son†, giving him therein very good counsel.*

My dear and only well beloved son,

I beseech our Lord in Heaven, the maker of all the world, to bless you, and to send you ever grace to love him, and to dread him, to the which, as far as a father may charge his child, I both charge you, and pray you to set all your spirits and wits to do, and to know his holy laws and commandments, by the which ye shall, with his great mercy, pass all the great tempests and troubles of this wretched world.

* William de la Pole, duke of Suffolk, succeeded his brother Michael, slain at the battle of Agincourt, in 1415, as earl of Suffolk; he was prime minister and favorite of Henry VI. and queen Margaret; was created in 1443, 23d Henry VI. marquis; and in 1448, 26th Henry VI. duke of Suffolk. He was banished by the king, at the instigation of the Commons, &c. and murdered on the sea, on the 2d of May, 1450, 28th Henry VI.

He married Alice, widow of Thomas de Montacute, earl of Salisbury, and daughter and heir of Thomas Chaucer, esq. of Ewelme, in Oxfordshire, and grand-daughter of Geoffrey Chaucer, the celebrated poet.

† John de la Pole (after his father's murder,) duke of Suffolk, &c. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Plantagenet, duke of York, and sister of Edward IV. He died in 1491, 7th Henry VII. and was buried by his father at Wingfield, in Suffolk.

And that, also weetingly, ye do nothing for love nor dread of any earthly creature that should displease him. And whenever any frailty maketh you to fall, beseech his mercy soon to call you to him again with repentance, satisfaction, and contrition of your heart, never more in will to offend him.

Secondly, next him above all earthly things, to be true liegeman in heart, in will, in thought, in deed, unto the king our greatest high and dread sovereign lord, to whom both ye and I be so much bound to ; charging you as father can and may, rather to die than to be the contrary, or to know any thing that were against the welfare* or prosperity of his most royal person, but as far as your body and life may stretch, ye live and die to defend it, and to let his highness have knowledge thereof in all the haste ye can.

Thirdly, in the same wise, I charge you, my dear son, alway as ye be bounden by the commandment of God, to do, to love, to worship, your lady and mother ; and also that ye obey alway her commandments, and to believe her counsels and advices in all your works, the which dread not but shall be best and truest to you.

And if any other body would steer you to the con-

* This very particular advice to his son, shows his fears for the king's personal safety at this time.

trary, to flee the counsel in any wise, for ye shall find it nought and evil.

Furthermore, as father may and can, I charge you in any wise to flee the company and counsel of proud men, of covetous men, and of flattering men, the more especially and mightily to withstand them, and not to draw nor to meddle with them, with all your might and power; and to draw to you and to your company, good and virtuous men, and such as be of good conversation, and of truth, and by them shall ye never be deceived nor repent you of.

Moreover, never follow your own wit in no wise, but in all your works, of such folks as I write of above, ask your advice and counsel, and doing thus, with the mercy of God, ye shall do right well, and live in right much worship, and in great heart's rest and ease.

And I will be to you as good lord and father as my heart can think.

And last of all, as heartily and as lovingly as ever father blessed his child in earth, I give you the blessing of our Lord and of me, which of his infinite mercy increase you in all virtue and good living; and that your blood may by his grace from kindred to kindred, multiply in this earth to his service, in such wise as after the departing from this wretched world here, ye and they may glorify him eternally amongst his angels in Heaven.

Written of mine hand, the day of my departing
fro this land.

Your true and loving father,
April, 1450, 28th H. VI. SUFFOLK.

To the Right Worshipful John Paston, at Norwich.

Right Worshipful Sir,

I recommend me to you, and am right sorry of
that I shall say, and have so washed this little bill
with sorrowful tears, that scarcely ye shall read it.

As on Monday next after May day (4th May,)
there came tidings to London, that on Thursday be-
fore, (30th April,) the duke of Suffolk came unto the
coasts of Kent*, full near Dover, with his two ships,
and a little spinner; the which spinner he sent with
certain letters, by certain of his trusted men unto
Calais ward, to know how he should be received;
and with him met a ship called Nicholas† of the
Tower, with other ships waiting on him, and by them
that were in the spinner, the master of the Nicholas
had knowledge of the duke's coming.

When he espied the duke's ships, he sent forth
his boat to *weet* what they were, and the duke

* Some of our historians say that he put to sea from the
coast of Norfolk. E.

† This ship belonged to Bristol in 1442, 20th Henry VI. and
was a great ship, with fore-stages, and carried 150 men. E.

himself spoke to them, and said, he was by the king's commandment, sent to Calais ward, &c. and they said he must speak with their master; and so he, with two or three of his men, went forth with them in their boat to the Nicholas; and when he came, the master bade him Welcome, Traitor, as men say.

And further, the master desired to *wete* if the shipmen would hold with the duke, and they sent word they would not in no wise; and so he was in the Nicholas till Saturday (2d May,) next following.

Some say he wrote much thing to be delivered to the king, but that is not verily known.

He had his confessor with him, &c.; and some say he was arraigned in the ship on their manner, upon the impeachments*, and found guilty, &c.

Also he asked the name of the ship, and when he knew it, he remembered Stacey†, that said, if he might escape the danger of the Tower, he should be safe; and then his heart failed him, for he thought he was deceived.

* Impeachments by the Commons. This shews that these ships were sent out on purpose to take him, &c. E.

† Prophecies in these times, were generally believed; and being always ambiguously expressed, had a greater chance of sometimes being fulfilled.

King Henry IV. from one of these ambiguous prophecies, believed he was to die in Jerusalem. E.

And in the sight of all his men, he was drawn out of the great ship into the boat, and there was an axe, and a stock, and one of the *lewdest*¹ of the ship bade him lay down his head, and he should be fairly fought with, and die on a sword; and he took a rusty sword, and smote off his head within half a dozen strokes, and took away his gown of russet, and his doublet of velvet mailed, and laid his body on the sands of Dover; and some say his head was set on a pole by it; and his men sit on the land by great circumstance*, and pray.

And the sheriff of Kent doth watch the body†, and [hath] sent his under sheriff to the judges, to *weet* what to do; and also to the king [to know] what shall be done.

Further I *wot* not, but thus far is it, if the process be erroneous, let his counsel reverse it, &c.

Also for all the other matters, they sleep, and the friar also, &c.

¹ meanest.

* *Query.* By great numbers? E.

† His body was taken from Dover Sands, and carried to the Collegiate Church of Wingfield, in Suffolk, where it lies interred under an altar tomb, in the chancel, with his effigies in armour, painted, gilt, &c. carved in wood, lying on it. It is remarkably well executed; as is that of Alice, his wife, likewise, which lies at his right hand. E.

Sir Thomas Keriell* is taken prisoner, and all the leg harness; and about 3000 Englishmen slain.

Matthew Gooth [*q. Gough*†?,] with 1500, fled, and saved himself and them. And Peris Brusy was chief captain, and had 10,000 Frenchmen and more, &c.

I pray you let my mistress, your mother, know these tidings, and God have you all in his keeping.

I pray you [that] this bill may recommend me to my mistresses, your mother and wife, &c.

James Gresham hath written to John of Dam, and recommendeth him, &c.

Written in great haste at London, the 5th of May, &c.

By your wife,

WILLIAM LOMNER.

London, Tuesday, 5th of May,

1450, 28th H. VI.

* He was taken prisoner at the battle of Fouronigni, fought on the 18th of April, 1450, where he defended himself with great bravery. He was beheaded by queen Margaret's order, after the 2d battle of St. Alban's, in 1460. E.

† *Query*, if the brave Matthew Gough, who was afterwards slain in Cade's rebellion, fighting on the citizen's part, in July, 1450, at the battle of the Bridge? E.

The conclusion of this letter puzzled me for a long time; at first I thought the word *wyfe* might be read *nief* or *servant*, but

the *w* was too much like all the others in the same letter, to warrant that reading. I think it may be thus explained :

In looking over this collection of letters, I found some subscribed W. L. and others William Lomner, in the same hand. But then this difficulty occurred,—how could W. L. or William Lomner, be the wife of John Paston ?

On examining some of the letters of Margaret Paston to her husband, and which were subscribed “ Be your wife,” I found them written in the same hand as those signed W. L. and William Lomner. I guess, therefore, that being used to write sometimes for his mistress to her husband, John Paston, he now, in his hurry, instead of concluding, “ By your servant, W. L.” as some of his letters do, he wrote by mistake, “ by your wyfe, W. L.”

The family of Lomner, had property both at Mannington and Wood Dalling, in Norfolk ; at the latter town, his son William built a castellated mansion. E.

Edward IV.

FENNS LETTERS,

(Continued.)

*Unto my right well-beloved Valentine, John Paston, Esq.
be this bill delivered, &c.*

Right reverend and worshipful, and my right
well beloved Valentine,

I recommend me unto you, full heartily desiring
to hear of your welfare, which I beseech Almighty
God long for to preserve unto his pleasure, and your
heart's desire.

And if it please you to hear of my welfare, I am
not in good *heel*¹ of body nor of heart, nor shall I
be till I hear from you; for there *wottys*² no creature,
what pain that I endure, and for to be dead, I dare it
not discover.

And my lady, my mother, hath laboured the mat-
ter to my father full diligently, but she can no more
get than ye know of, for the which God knoweth, I
am full sorry. But if that ye love me, as I trust ve-
rily that ye do, ye will not leave me therefore.

¹ health.

² knows.

And if ye command me to keep me true wherever I go,
 I wis I will do all my might you to love, and never no mo.
 And if my friends say, that I do amiss,
 They shall not me let so for to do,
 Mine heart me binds evermore to love you,
 Truly over all earthly thing,
 And if they be never so wrath,
 I trust it shall be better in time coming.

No more to you at this time, but the Holy Trinity have you in keeping; and I beseech you that this bill be not seen of none earthly creature, save only yourself, &c.

And this letter was indited at Topcroft, with full heavy heart, &c.

By your own,

MARGERY BREWS.

Topcroft, February, 1476-7,

16th E. IV.

*To my right well-beloved cousin, John Paston, Esq. be
 this letter delivered, &c.*

Right worshipful and well beloved Valentine,

In my most humble wise, I recommend me unto you, &c. And heartily I thank you for the letter, which that ye send me by John Beckerton, whereby I understand and know, that ye be purposed to come

to Topcroft in short time, and without any errant or matter, but only to have a conclusion of the matter betwixt my father and you; I would be the most glad of any creature alive, so that the matter may grow to effect. And thereas [whereas] ye say, and [if] ye come and find the matter no more towards you than ye did aforetime, ye would no more put my father and my lady, my mother, to no cost nor business, for that cause a good while after, which causeth my heart to be full heavy; and if that ye come, and the matter take to none effect, then should I be much more sorry, and full of heaviness.

And as for myself, I have done, and understand in the matter that I can or may, as God knoweth; and I let you plainly understand that my father will no more money part withal in that behalf, but an 100l. and 5 marks, [33l. 6s. 8d.] which is right far from the accomplishment of your desire.

Wherefore, if that ye could be content with that good, and my poor person, I would be the merriest maiden on ground; and if ye think not yourself so satisfied, or that ye might have much more good, as I have understood by you afore; good, true, and loving Valentine, that ye take no such labour upon you, as to come more for that matter. But let [what] is, pass, and never more to be spoken of, as I may be your true lover and beadwoman during my life.

No more unto you at this time, but Almighty
Jesu preserve you both body and soul, &c.

By your Valentine,

MARGERY BREWS.

Topcroft, 1476-7.

“We are here furnished with a curious, though
imperfect catalogue, of the library of a gentle-
man in the reign of Edward the Fourth.

“It is written on a strip of paper, about seven-
teen inches long, and has been rolled up; by
which means, one end having been damp, is
entirely decayed; so that the names of some
of the books are imperfect, and the then price
or value of all of them, is not now to be dis-
covered, that having been uniformly written
at the end, which is now destroyed.

“It contained an account of all the books he
had, as it mentions those which were lent out
at the same time the catalogue was made; and
though the name of the owner is gone, yet by
comparing the list with the account of Wil-
liam Ebesham, in Letter XXIV. it fixes it to
the library of John Paston.

“It contained only one book in print, the rest

being manuscripts, and appear to have been bound together, as numbered 1, 2, 3, &c. in the inventory.

“An account of most of the books mentioned is to be found in Mr. Warton’s ‘History of English Poetry,’ and some of them, when afterwards printed, in Mr. Herbert’s improved edition of Ames’s ‘History of Printing;’ to these therefore I refer the reader.”

The Inventory of English Books, of John Paston, made the 5th day of November, in the year of the reign of Edward IV.

1. A book had of my hostess at the George, of the Death of Arthur, beginning at Cassibelan.
Guy Earl of Warwick.
King Richard Cœur de Lion.
A Chronicle to Edward III. price
2. *Item*—A Book of Troilus, which William Br.... hath had near ten years, and lent it to Dame Wyngfeld, and there I saw it worth
3. *Item*—A Black Book, with the Legend of Lady sans Merci.
The Parliament of Birds.
The Temple of Glass.
Palatyse and Sciatus.

The Meditations of

The Green Knight worth

4. *Item*—A Book in print of the play of

5. *Item*—A Book lent Midelton, and therein is
Belle Dame sans Merci.

The Parliament of Birds.

Ballad of Guy and Colbrond,

..... the Goose, the

The Disputing between Hope and Despair.

..... Merchants.

The Life Saint Cry

6. A red Book that Percival Robsart gave me ;
of the Meeds of the Mass.

The Lamentation of Child Ipotis.

A Prayer to the Vernicle,

called the Abbey of the Holy Ghost.

7. *Item*—in quires, Tully *de Senectute* in diverse
whereof there is no more clear writing.

8. *Item*—in quires, Tully or Cypio [Cicero] *de Amicitia*, left with William Worcester,
worth

9. *Item*—in quires, a Book of the Policy of I,

10. *Item*—in quires, a Book *de Sapientia*,
wherein the second person is likened to Sapience.

11. *Item*—a Book *de Othea*, [on Wisdom] text and
gloss, worth in quires.

Memorandum; mine old Book of Blazonings of
Arms.

Item—the new book portrayed and blazoned.

Item—a Copy of Blazonings of Arms, and the names to be found by letter [alphabetically].

Item—a Book with arms portrayed in paper.

Memorandum; my Book of Knighthood, and the manner of making of Knights of Justs, of Tournaments;

fighting in lists; paces holden by soldiers;

Challenges; Statutes of War; and *de Regimine Principum* worth

Item—a Book of new Statutes from Edward the IV.

5th of November, E. IV.

THE next writer of note is **CAXTON**, our first printer. But before I speak particularly of him, it will be proper to give a brief view of the literature of France, during the latter centuries of the middle ages, as that is the chief source whence Caxton drew his materials for enriching his vernacular language.

From the thirteenth century, to about the middle of the fifteenth, the French had been occupied in translating books from the Latin. They consisted chiefly of legends, rituals, monastic rules, chronicles, pandicts and feudal coutumes, romances, &c. To these we may also add, versions of some of the classics. These translations were commonly in verse. But in the year 1207, Turpin's Charlemagne, contrary to the usual practice of turning Latin prose into French rhimes, was translated into French prose, by Michael de Harnes. And a *Life of Charles the Great*, was printed by Caxton, in 1485.

In the year 1245, a system of theology, the seven sciences, geography, and natural philo-

sophy, under the title *Speculum Mundi*, was translated into French, at the instance of the duke of Berry and Auvergne. This was converted into English, and printed by Caxton in 1480.

In the fourteenth century, the spirit of devotional curiosity—a spirit kindled by St. Louis—was still more productive of holy treatises. Under the reign of king John and Charles V. we have French translations of St. Austin, Cassianus, and Gregory the Great, the first of the fathers which appeared in a modern tongue. Also Gregory's Homilies, and his Dialogues; with St. Austin *de Civitate Dei*; and various other treatises which it is unnecessary to particularise.

John, the French king, on his return from his captivity in England, was particularly zealous in his encouragement of this work of translation; and when he had fatigued his curiosity, and satisfied his conscience, by procuring numerous versions of religious treatises, he at last directed his attention to the classics. It was a circumstance auspicious to letters, that he was ignorant of the Latin: for this ignorance rendered him the

more curious to become acquainted with the treasures of Roman learning; and he employed Peter Bercheur, prior of St. Eloi, at Paris, an eminent theologian, to translate Livy into French, in spite of the anathema of pope Gregory against that admirable historian. So judicious a choice was doubtless suggested by Petrarca, who was at this time resident at the court of France, and who regarded Livy with enthusiastic admiration. To the translation of Livy, succeeded those of Sallust, Lucan, and Cæsar, all of which were probably finished before the year 1365. A version of Valerius Maximus was begun in 1364, by Simon de Hesdin, a monk; but finished by Nicolas de Gonesse, a master of theology, in 1401. Ovid's *Metamorphoses moralized*, supposed to have been written in Latin about 1070, were translated by Guillaume de Nangis; and the same poem was translated into French, at the request of Jane de Bourbonne, afterwards consort of Charles V. by Philip Vitri, bishop of Meaux, the friend of Petrarca, and who was living in 1361. A French version, too, of Cicero's *Rhetorica*, by master John de Antioche, appeared in 1383.

About the same time, parts of the works of Aristotle were translated into French from the Latin ; his *Problems*, by Evrard de Conti, physician to Charles V. ; and his *Ethics* and *Politics*, by Nicolas d'Oresme, while canon of Rouen. Other Greek classics likewise became known by Latin versions ; they were also familiarized to general readers by versions from the Latin into French. Thus the Latin version of Xenophon's *Cyropædia*, by Poggius Florentinus, was translated into French in 1370, by Vasque de Lucerie.

In the fifteenth century, the French began to revise and polish the translations of the two preceding centuries ; and to turn many of their metrical versions into prose. The introduction, too, of more entertaining and better books, and their multiplication arising from the invention of printing, had the effect of abating the rage for legends, and other superstitious tracts : for the printers, who multiplied greatly towards the close of this century, found it their interest, instead of procuring expensive versions of the ancient fathers, &c. to publish new translations of books of greater entertainment. Among these may be mentioned, as

instances, *Lancelot du Lac*, translated from the Latin, by Robert de Borron, at the command of our Henry II. or III. and *Gyron le Courtois*.

This century produced also many French versions of classics. An abridgement of the three first decads of Livy, was made by Henry Romain, a canon of Tournay. In 1416, Jean de Courci, a knight of Normandy, gave a translation of some Latin Chronicle, "A History of the Greeks and Romans,"—entitled "Bouquassiere." We have also the "Four Cardinal Virtues" of Seneca; Quintus Curtius, in 1468; Cæsar's Commentaries; Terence, 1466; Ovid's Metamorphoses. The *Œconomics* of Aristotle, and Tully's *de Amicitia*, and *de Senectute*, before the year 1426. Tully's Oration against Verres, by Jean de Lunenbourg. Also Hippocrates and Galen, in 1429, by John Toustier, surgeon to the duke of Bedford, then regent of France. The Iliad, about the same period, was also translated into French metre, probably from a Latin version. The *Æneid* of Virgil, was translated into a sort of metrical romance, or history of Æneas, under the title of *Livre d'Eneidos, compilé par Virgile*, by

Guillaume de Roi ; printed in 1483, at Lyons. The translator has made various interpolations and omissions ; as a description of the first foundation of Troy, by Priam ; and the succession of Ascanius and his descendants, after the death of Turnus. There is a digression upon Boccacio, reprehending him for giving, in his “ Fall of Princes,” an account of the death of Dido, different from that in the fourth book of the *Æneid*. He passes over *Æneas’s* descent into hell, as a tale manifestly forged and incredible.

It has been before observed, that the intimate connection subsisting between France and England for several centuries subsequent to the conquest, rendered the French language common between the two nations. Books, therefore, of any description, did not long exist in France, without finding their way to this country. MS. copies were presented, either by the translators or their patrons, to the kings of England ; and are still to be found among the royal MSS. in the British Museum. Many of these MSS. were elegantly written, and often embellished with curious miniatures, and with the most splendid illuminations.

Others were brought to England, and repositied in the royal library, by John, duke of Bedford, when regent of France. A few of these MSS. were transcribed, if not translated, by command of our kings.

In this manner some acquaintance with classical literature was introduced prior to the revival of letters. Before the translation of Livy, by Bercheur, had been brought into England, by the regent duke of Bedford, few Englishmen had probably read that historian. Many of the Roman poets and historians were now perused in the original, though the knowledge of the Latin was chiefly confined to a few ecclesiastics. These authors, however, through the medium of the French, became intelligible to ordinary readers, and thus assisted in sowing the seeds of taste, and of a national literature. Even the French versions of the superstitious dreams of speculative monks, and the allegorical and philosophical reveries of irrefragable doctors, in their day, were not without their utility. They served to excite a taste for reading, which, when once awake, seeks continually to be gratified with new objects.

Such were the sources whence Caxton had to draw for the exercise of his wonderful art, for the improvement of his native tongue, and for the amusement and instruction of his countrymen. I now proceed to a more particular account of that indefatigable benefactor of his species.

CAXTON.

WILLIAM CAXTON, the person who introduced and first practised the art of printing in England, was born about the close of the reign of Henry IV. in the *Weald*, or woody part of Kent. He was taught by his mother to read and write; and subsequently attained by his own industry, a competent knowledge of the Latin and French. At the age of fifteen or sixteen, he was put apprentice to a mercer of eminence in London; and in consideration of his integrity and good behaviour, his master, at his death, in 1441, bequeathed him a legacy of thirty-four marks; a considerable sum in those days. Being now a man of some property, of a respectable character, and very expert in his business, he was chosen by the mercer's company, of which he was become a freeman, to be their agent or factor, in Holland, Zealand, Flanders, &c. In these countries, he spent about twenty-three years; during which he acquired such a character for knowledge and experience, that in 1464, we find him as-

sociated with Richard Whetehill, Esq. in a commission, entrusted to them by Edward IV. to continue and confirm the treaty of commerce, between his majesty and Philip duke of Burgundy; or to make a new one, if thought necessary. This intercourse in trade, creating a common interest, produced in 1468, a marriage between the lady Margaret of York, sister to Edward, and the duke's son Charles, then duke of Burgundy.

Caxton was expert in penmanship, and by his residence abroad, and intercourse with literary men, had become well versed in languages and general literature. The new invention of printing was, at this time, the subject of general interest and conversation on the continent; and Caxton, at a great expence, made himself a practical master of this unrivalled invention. His skill in the art, probably, obtained him the countenance of Margaret, now duchess of Burgundy, who encouraged him in the practice of it, and established him in her service. He was employed by her in translating a large volume from the French, and afterwards in printing it. This work was published under the title of "The Recuyell of the Histories of Troye," &c. and is remarkable as being

the first book ever printed in the English language. Caxton was engaged upon it for some time at Ghent, but finished it at Cologne, in 1471, on which he returned to Bruges, and presented it to the lady Margaret, who liberally rewarded him for his trouble. Having sold as many copies as he could on the continent, he returned in 1472, to England, bringing with him the remainder, as specimens of his skill; and hence is dated the introduction of the art of printing into this country. The art itself, however, was not practised here, either by himself, or any one else, till about two years after.

The first book printed in England was "The Game of Chess," dated 1474. And we learn from Stowe's Survey of London (edit. fol. 1633, p. 515,) "that in the Eleemosinary, or Almonry, at Westminster Abbey, (now corruptly called Ambry, for that the alms of the Abbey were there distributed to the poor,) John Islep, abbot of Westminster, erected the first press of book-printing, that ever was in England; and Caxton was the first that practised it in the said Abbey." Stowe, however, is mistaken in the person who was abbot in the year mentioned. It was not Islep, but Dr.

Thomas Milling, a man famous for his knowledge of Greek in that period.

In 1479, a printing press was also established at Oxford; and not long after at St. Albans.

Printing was first performed by means of wooden types, fastened very incommodiously together. Caxton was the first who printed with fusile types. His successor, Wynkin de Worde, added some improvements to the art, and particularly introduced musical notes, and, as some suppose, the Roman numerals. Pynson, by extraction a Norman, was the first who used the Roman character. The introduction of the paper-manufactory also into England, in the reign of Henry VIII. or perhaps towards the close of the reign of Henry VII. contributed to facilitate and augment the improvements in the typographical art.

Caxton was a man of great modesty and simplicity of character, joined with indefatigable industry. He commonly stiles himself "simple William Caxton." He continued to prepare copy for the press even to the last; and though his talents were not brilliant, his great, his incalculable services to mankind, in being the instrument of introducing an art, of all others the most widely and permanently bene-

ficial, entitle him to the eternal thanks of the human race ; and we would willingly afford him higher commendation, than the equivocal praise bestowed upon him by Bale, who says that he was—“ *vir non omnino stupidus, aut ignaviâ torpens ; sed propagandæ suæ gentis memoriæ studiosus admodum.*” His last work was a translation from the French, of a large volume, entitled “The Holy Lives of the Fathers Hermits, living in the Deserts,” a work which he finished, together with his life, on the same day, in the year 1491.

The books printed by Caxton, were very numerous, amounting in the whole to nearly sixty. A great number of these he translated, as well as printed ; and those which he did not translate, he often revised and altered ; so that in point of language, they may be considered as his own. Of a few of these books, I shall now proceed to give extracts, with a brief account of each. Those who are desirous of a more complete view than is compatible with the object of this work, may consult the Life of Caxton, by Lewis, or Ames’s Typographical Antiquities ; as likewise Bowyer’s Essays, on the same subject, with other sources.

THE CHRONICLES OF ENGLAND.

THIS book was first translated from a French Chronicle (MSS. Harl. 200, 4to.) written in the beginning of the reign of Edward III. The French have also a famous ancient prose Romance, called *Brut*, which includes the history of the Sangreal; but I know not whether this is the same with the English copy.

These Chronicles were printed by Caxton, in 1480, in the 20th of Edward IV. They were also printed, together with the “Fruit of Times,” in a thick short folio, in 1483, at St. Albans. Hence they have been called the Book of St. Albans, and the Chronicle of St. Albans. In this edition, which was re-printed by Wynkin de Worde, in 1497, the names of the authors, from whom it was chiefly compiled, are enumerated; viz. “1. Galfridus Monmouth, monk, in his book of Brute; 2. S. Bede, in the Acts of England, in his book of Times; 3. Gildas, in the Acts of Britain; 4. William of Malmsbury, monk; in the Acts of the Kings of England and Bishops; 5. Cassiodorus, of the Acts of Emperors and Bishops;

6. St. Austin *de Civitate Dei*; 7. Titus Livius *de Gestis Romanorum*; 8. Martin, penitentiary to the pope, in his *Chronicles of Emperors and Bishops*; 9. and lastly, Theobaldus Cartusiensis, containing in his book the progress of all notable fathers, from the beginning of the world unto our time, with the notable acts of the same."

This work is divided into seven parts; of which the last makes half the book, and begins at the conquest. In the prologue, the author proposes to continue these *Chronicles*, "from the Normans to our time, which is under the reign of king Edward IV. the 23d year, whose noble *Chronicles*, by custom, may not be seen." The writer, however, was probably prevented by death, from completing his design: for at the end of his *Chronicle*, he does not descend so low by nearly a dozen years; and the last paragraph ends with the popedom of Sixtus IV. who was elected in 1471, and was still living, "At the making of this book," which concludes by saying, "that John Abbot, of Habington, was the pope's legate in England, to dispose of the treasure of the church, to withstand the misbelievable Turk," &c.

The book first mentioned, printed by Caxton, is likewise divided into seven parts; and also into 263 chapters. The last, or 263d, treats "Of the Deposition of king Henry VI. and how king Edward IV. took possession of the realm; and of the battle on Palm-Sunday; and how he was wounded."

The Chronicles, as printed by Caxton, were common before the introduction of printing. In those times of popery, no English Chronicle was so generally read; nor any, for above 150 years after, so often reprinted; amounting in the whole, to five or six impressions, in the space of thirty years. To the latter editions is annexed, "The Description of England," taken from the *Polychronicon*. Pynson's edition concludes with a short Latin epilogue, briefly enumerating the kings of England from the conquest.

As the fabulous history of Britain may not be familiar to all my readers, it may be entertaining to such persons, to know who were its aboriginal inhabitants, according to the account, and in the language of these early Chronicles. I shall therefore lay before the reader, the story of the first peopling of our island, together with the legend of Brute, entire. But previ-

ous to this, it may be proper to premise, that the story of Brute and his Trojans, is taken from Geoffrey of Monmouth ; and for the benefit of the uninformed reader, to give a brief statement of the origin of this romantic fable, with others contained in that ancient historian.

About the year 1100, Walter Mapes, archdeacon of Oxford, in his travels through France, procured in Armorica, or Bretagne, an ancient chronicle, entitled *Brut-y-Brenhined* ; i. e. the History of the Kings of Britain. On his return to England, he communicated the MS. to Geoffrey of Monmouth, a Welch benedictine monk, with a request that he would translate it into Latin. In this translation, Geoffrey has interwoven various traditions from the testimony of his friend, the archdeacon, who learnt them in Armorica ; and also has probably added others known to himself, as popular in Wales. In particular, some part of the account of king Arthur's achievements, he acknowledges to have received from the mouth of Walter ; and confesses that Merlin's prophecies were not in the Armorican original. Geoffrey's translation was probably finished after the year 1138.

Mr. Warton supposes that the British ori-

ginal consisted of fables thrown out by different rhapsodists, at different times, which were afterwards collected and digested into an entire history, perhaps with new decorations of fancy by the compiler, whom he conjectures to have been one of the professed bards, or rather, a poetical historian of Armorica, or Basse Bretagne; and that in this state it fell into the hands of Geoffrey of Monmouth. This Chronicle, divested of its romantic embellishments, deduces the Welch princes from the Trojan Brutus to Cadwallader, who reigned in the seventh century.

It is remarkable, that this humour of tracing their descent from Troy, prevailed from the sixth and seventh centuries downwards, among most of the European nations. Hunnibaldus Francus, in his Latin history of France, beginning with the Trojan war, and ending with Clovis the First, ascribes the origin of the French nation to Francio, a son of Priam. And even the Greeks did not escape the preposterous ambition of being thought to be descended from their ancient and notorious enemies. This absurd emulation, among the European nations, for the honour of a Trojan alliance, is supposed by Warton, to have originated from the revival of Virgil's *Æneid*, about

the sixth or seventh century, which represented the Trojans as the founders of Rome, the capital of the supreme pontiff, and a city which, in the early ages of christianity, was regarded with a sort of reverential admiration. The monks and other ecclesiastics, the only readers and writers of the age, were interested in propagating the opinion; and in proportion as the barbarous European nations received a tincture of literature, they eagerly imbibed the prevalent fashion of deducing their original from some of the nations the most renowned in ancient story. Some nations boasted their descent from some of the generals of Alexander the Great; from Prusias of Bithynia; from the Greeks, or the Egyptians. The Britons, as likewise other European nations, who were long provincial to Rome, probably derived their notions of Trojan extraction, from their conquerors.

The legend of Brutus, with the history of his successors, is presumed not to have been contrived, till after the ninth century; since Nennius, who flourished about the middle of that century, though he gives an obscure outline of the story of Brutus, is totally uninformed respecting the affairs of Britain, prior to Cæ-

sar's invasion. Again, Alfred's translation of the Mercian law, is mentioned ; and Charlemagne's twelve peers are said to have been present at king Arthur's magnificent coronation in the city of Caerleon—anachronisms not uncommon in romance. “ It were easy (says Warton,) to produce instances that this Chronicle was undoubtedly framed after the legend of St. Ursula, the acts of St. Lucius, and the historical writings of the venerable Bede, had undergone some degree of circulation in the world.” Some parts of it again must have been written as low down, or after the eleventh century : for Canute's Forest, or Cannock-Wood, in Staffordshire, occurs ; and Canute died in 1036. Moreover, at the ideal coronation of king Arthur, a splendid tournament is described ; and tournaments did not exist, in all their peculiar formalities and ceremonious usages, till several centuries after the time of Arthur. The burial of Hengist too, the Saxon chief, who is said to have been interred not after the Pagan fashion, but after the manner of the *Soldans*, conspires with the above arguments, to prove that the Chronicle in question was compiled about the time of the crusades : for it was subsequent to those holy expeditions, that the

soldans or sultans of Babylon, of Egypt, of Iconium, and other Eastern kingdoms, became familiar in Europe.

The conclusion, however, of Warton, that the fictions in Geoffrey of Monmouth, instead of being fabricated by the Welsh bards, are *all* inventions of Arabian origin, seems to require important limitations. Mr. Ellis, in the introductory sections to his "Specimens of early English Metrical Romances," 1805, supposes, with greater appearance of probability, "that the scenes and characters of our romantic histories, were very generally, though not exclusively, derived from the Britons, or from the Welsh of this island; that much of the colouring, and perhaps some particular adventures, may be of Scandinavian origin; and that occasional episodes, together with part of the machinery, may have been borrowed from the Arabians." It is unnecessary, in this place, to enter further into the controversy, to which difference of opinion on this subject has given birth; and particularly, as Mr. Ellis, in the publication above alluded to, has treated it at considerable length. I shall simply exhibit, therefore, his general conclusion from the whole; referring the reader

for a detailed account of the dispute, to his preliminary essays.

It has been asserted, that Geoffrey of Monmouth invented a very considerable part of the Chronicle, which he professed to translate from a British original; since the fables it contains are calculated to give an exaggerated idea of British greatness. But the outline of the fable of Brutus is contained in Nennius, who traces the genealogy of that prince up to Adam. The same historian also gives a circumstantial account of Merlin. Hence, the invention of these tales must be placed three centuries prior to Geoffrey. Mr. Ellis supposes, moreover, that the Chronicle in question was fabricated gradually; and progressively erected on the foundation of Nennius's History; and concludes generally, "that Geoffrey's Chronicle is, as it professes to be, a translation from some British original; and that this original was compiled between the ninth and twelfth centuries, and presents a faithful picture of the traditions and fables then received as history."

To proceed now to the story. The author begins with observing:

Before that I will speak of Brute, it shall be shewed how the land of England was first named Albion, and by what *encheson*¹ it was so named.

Of the noble land of Syria, there was a royal king and mighty, and a man of great renown, that was called Dioclesian, that well and worthily him governed and ruled thro' his noble chivalry; so that he conquered all the lands about him; so that almost all the kings of the world to him were attendant. It befel thus that this Dioclesian spoused a gentle damsel that was wonder fair, that was his uncle's daughter, Labana. And she loved him as reason would; so that he gat upon her thirty-three daughters; of the which the eldest was called Albine. And these damsels, when they came unto age, became so fair that it was wonder. Whereof Dioclesian anon let make a summoning, and commanded by his letters, that all the kings that held of him should come at a certain day, as in his letters were contained, to make a feast royal. At which day, thither they came, and brought with them admirals, princes, and dukes, and noble chivalry. The feast was royally arrayed; and there they lived in joy and mirth enough, that it was wonder to *wyte*. And it befel thus, that Dioclesian thought to marry his daughters among all these kings that were of that solemnity. And so they spake and did, that Albine,

¹ chance.

his eldest daughter, and all her sisters, richly were married unto thirty-three kings, that were lords of great honour and of power at this solemnity. And when the solemnity was done, every king took his wife, and led them into their own country, and there made them queens.

And it befel them, afterward, that this dame Albine became so stout and so stern, that she could little prise of her lord, and of him had scorn and despite, and would not do his will, but she would have her own will in divers matters. And all her other sisters every one bare them so evil against their lords, that it was wonder to *wyte*. And foras-much that them thought, that their husbands were not of so high parentage come as their father. But those kings, that were their lords, would have chastised them with fair manner, upon all love and friendship, that they should amend their self-willed conditions; but all was for nought: for they did their own will in all thing that they liked, and had of power. Wherefore those thirty-three kings, upon a time, and oftentimes, beat their wives: for they willed that they would amend their *tatches* and their wickedness. But of such conditions they were, that for fair speech and warning, they did all the worse; and for beatings oftentimes much the worse. Wherefore the king that had wedded Albine, wrote the *tatches* and conditions of his wife Albine, and sent the letter to

Dioclesian, his father. And when the other kings heard that Albine's lord had sent a letter to Dioclesian; anon, they sent letters, sealed with their seals, the conditions and *tatches* of their wives. When the king Dioclesian saw and heard so many complaints of his daughters, he was sore ashamed, and became wonder angry and wroth toward his daughters, and thought how he thence might amend it that they so misdid; and anon sent his letters unto the thirty-three kings, that they should come to him, and bring with them their wives, every one at a certain day: for he would then chastise them of their wickedness, if he might in any manner wise.

So the kings came all at that time and day, that then was set between him and the kings. Dioclesian received them with much honour, and made a solemn feast to all that were underneath his lordship. And the third day after that solemnity, the king Dioclesian sent after his thirty-three daughters, that they should come and speak with him in his chamber. And when they were come, he spake to them of their wickedness, and of their cruelty, and spitefully them reprovèd and blamed. And to them he said, that if they would not *be chastised*¹, they should his love lose for evermore.

And when the ladies heard all this, they became

¹ amended.

abashed, and greatly ashamed; and to their father they said, that they would make all amends; and so they departed out of their father's chamber.

And dame Albine, that was the eldest sister, led them all to her chamber; and then made to void all that were therein; so that no person was among them, but she and her sisters together. Then said Albine: my fair sisters, well we know that the king, our father, us hath reprovèd, shamed, and despised, for because to make us obedient unto our husbands. But *certes* that shall I never, whilst that I live; *syth* that I am come of a more higher king's blood than mine husbaud. And when she had thus said, all her sisters said the same. And then, said Albine, well I *wote* fair sisters, that our husbands have complained unto our father upon us; wherefore he has thus foul reprovèd and despised. Wherefore, sisters, my counsel is, that this night, when our husbands *ben* a-bed, all we, with one assent, for to cut their throats; and then we may be in peace of them. And better we now do this thing, under our father's power, than other where else. And anon, all the ladies consented, and granted to this counsel. And when night was come, the lords and ladies went to bed. And anon, as their lords were asleep, they cut all their husbands' throats; and so they slew them all.

When that Dioclesian, their father, heard of this thing, he became furiously wroth against his daugh-

ters, and anon, would them all have *brente*¹. But all the barons and lords of Syria, counseled not so for to do such *straitness*², to his own daughters; but only should void the land of them for evermore; so that they never should come again; and so he did.

And Dioclesian, that was their father, anon commanded them to go into a ship, and delivered to them victuals for half a year. And when this was done, all the sisters went into the ship, and sailed forth in the sea, and took all their friends to *Apolin*, that was their God. And so long they sailed in the sea, till at the last they came and arrived in an isle, that was all wilderness. And when dame Albine was come to that land, and all her sisters, this Albine went first forth out of the ship, and said to her other sisters: for as much (said she,) as I am the eldest sister of all this company, and first this land hath taken; and for as much as my name is Albine, I will that this land be called Albion, after mine own name. And anon, all her sisters granted to her with a good will.

And *tho* went out all the sisters of the ship, and took the land Albion, as their sister called it. And there they went up and down, and found neither man, *ne* woman, *ne* child; but wild beasts of divers kinds. And when the victual were dispended, and they failed, they fed them with herbs and fruits,

¹ burnt.² strictness.

In the season of the year; and so they lived as they best might. And after that, they took flesh of divers beasts, and became wonder fat; and so they desired man's company, and man's kind that them failed. And for heat, they waxed wonder courageous of kind, so that they desired more man's company, than any other solace and mirth.

When the devil that perceived, [he] went by divers countries, and took a body of the air, and liking natures *shed* of men; and came into the land of Albion, and lay by those women, and *shed* those natures upon them, and they conceived, and after brought forth giants. Of the which one was called Gogmagog, and another Longherigam; and so they were named by divers names. And in this manner there came forth and were born horrible giants in Albion. And they dwelled in caves and hills, at their will, and had the land of Albion as them liked, unto the time that Brute arrived, and came to Totness, that was in the isle of Albion. And there this Brute conquered and discomfited the giants above-said.

Explicit prima pars.

Here beginneth now how Brute was gotten, and how he slew first his mother, and after his father. And how

he conquered Albion; that after he named Britain, after his own name, that now is called England, after the name of Engist, of Saxony. This Brute came into Britain, about the 18th year of Hely.

Be it known, that in the noble city of Great Troy, there was a noble knight, and a man of great power, that was called Æneas. And when the city of Troy was lost and destroyed thro' them of Greece, this Æneas, with all his men, fled thence, and came to Lombardy. There then was lord and governor of the land, a king that was called Latyne; and another king there was that was called Turocelyne, that strongly warred upon this king *Latyne*, that oftentimes did him much harm. And when this king *Latyne* heard that Æneas was come, he received him with much honour, and him *withheld*¹, for as much as he had heard of him, and *wist* well that he was a noble knight, and a worthy, of his body and his deeds. This Æneas helped king *Latyne* in his war; and shortly for to tell, so well and so worthily he did, that he slew Turocelyne, and discomfitted him and all his people.

And when all this was done, king *Latyne* gave all that land that was Turocelyne's, to this noble man Æneas, in marriage with *Lavyne*, his daughter, the most fairest creature that any man *wist*. And they

¹ detained.

lived together in joy and mirth, all the days of their life time.

And after, Ascanius, son to Æneas, wedded a wife. And upon her he gat a son, that was called Silvyne. And this Silvyne when he *could*¹ some reason of man, *unweeting*² his father and against his will, acquainted him with a damsel that was cousin to Lavyne, that was king Latyne's daughter, the queen that was Æneas's wife, and brought the damsel with child. And when Ascanius, his father it *wist*, anon let inquiry of the wisest masters, and of the greatest clerks, what child the damsel should bring forth? And they answered and said, that she should bring forth a son, that should kill both his father and also his mother. And so he did: for his mother died in bearing of him. And when this child was born, his father let call him Brute. And the masters said that he should do much harm and sorrow in many divers places; and after, he should come to great honour and worship. This king Ascanius died when God would; and Silvyne, his son, received the land, and made him wonderfully well beloved among his people. And so when Brute, that was Silvyne's son, was fifteen year old, he went upon a day with his father, for to play and solace. And as Brute should have shot unto an hart, his arrow mishapped and glanced, and so there Brute slew his father.

¹ knew.

² unknowing.

*How Brute was driven out of the land, and how he held
him in Greece.*

And when this mischance was befall, all the people of the land made sorrow enough, and were sore anged. And for *encheson* thereof, they drove Brute out of the land, and would not suffer him among them. And when he saw that he might not there abide, he went from thence into Greece, and there he found seven thousand men that were of the lineage and kindred of Troy, that were come of great blood, as the story telleth, as of men and women, and children, the which were all hold in thraldom and bondage of the king Pandras, of Greece, for the death of Achilles, that was betrayed and slain at Troy. This Brute was a wonder fair man, and a strong and a huge of his age, and of glad cheer and *semblant*¹, and also worthy of body, and was well beloved among his people. This king Pandras heard speak of his goodness, and his conditions, and anon made him dwell with him, so that Brute became wonder *privy*², and much beloved with the king; so that long time Brute dwelled with the king.

So at the last, they of Troy and Brute spake together of kindred and of lineage, and of acquaintance. And they plained them unto Brute of their

¹ appearance.

² intimate.

sorrow, and of their bondage, and of many other shames that the king Pandras had them done. And unto Brute they said upon a time, ye be a lord of our lineage, and a strong man and a mighty; ye be our captain and lord, and governor, and we will become your men, and your commandments do in all manner of things. And bring us out of this wretchedness and bondage, and we will fight with the king for truth. With the grace of the Great God, we shall him overcome; and we shall make you king of the land, and to you do homage, and of you we shall hold evermore.

Brute had *tho* great pity of their bondage that they were brought in; and prively went then from the king's court. And *tho*, them that were of Troy, went and put them into woods, and into mountains, and them there held; and sent unto king Pandras, that he should give them leave safely for to *wend*¹ out of the land: for they would no longer dwell in his bondage.

The king Pandras waxed *tho* sore annoyed, and *tho* swore that he should *slee* them every one; and ordained a great power, and went toward them all for to fight. But Brute and his men manly them defeated, and fiercely fought and slew all the king's men, that none of them escaped; and took the king, and held him in prison, and ordained council between

them what they might *done*¹. And some said, that he should be put to death; and some said that he should be exiled out of the land; and some said that he should be *brent*.

And then spake a wise knight that was called Mempris, and said to Brute, and to all those of Troy: "If king Pandras would yield him and have his life, I counsel that he give unto Brute that is our duke, and our sovereign, his daughter Gennogen to a wife; and in marriage with her, a hundred ships, well arrayed, and all his treasure of gold and silver; of corn and of wine; and as much as we need to have of one thing and another. And thence go we out of this land, and ordain us a land elsewhere: for we, *ne* none of our kindred that come after us, shall never have peace in this land, among them of Greece. For we have slain so many of their knights and other friends, that evermore war and *contact*² should be among us."

Brute *tho*, and all his folk, consented well to that counsel. And this thing they told to king Pandras. And he, for to have his life, granted as much as they axed; and anon gave unto Brute, Genongen, his daughter to wife, and a hundred ships, with as much as them needed of all victuals, as afore was ordained.

Brute *tho* took his wife and his men, that forsook

¹ do.

² conflict.

the land of Greece, and went thence unto the sea, and had wind and weather at their will, and came the third day into an isle that was called Lorgers. This Brute, anon, sent of his men a land for to espy the manner of the country. And they found an old city all wasted and *forlet*¹, that there was therein neither man, woman, *ne* nothing dwelling; and in the middle of this city they found an old temple of a fair lady, that was called Diana, the goddess. And they came again unto Brute, and told him what they had seen and found. And they counselled him to go and do sacrifice unto dame Diana: for she was wont to give answer of whatever men prayed, and namely unto them that her honoured with sacrifice. Brute went unto that *yamge*² and said, "Diana, noble goddess, that all thing hast in thy might and power, winds, waters, woods, field, and all things of the world, and all manner of beasts that there are, to you I make my prayer, that ye me counsel and tell, where, and in what place, I shall have a *conenable*³ dwelling for me and for my people; and there I shall make, in honour of you, a well fair temple and a noble, wherein ye shall alway be honoured."

When he had done his prayer, Diana answered in this manner: "Brute, (said she) go even forth thy way over the sea into France, towards the west, and

¹ deserted.² fane?³ convenient.

there ye shall find an isle that is called Albion; and that isle is becompassed all with the sea; and no man may come therein, *but*¹ it be by ships. And in that land were wont to dwell giants; but now it is not so, but all wilderness. And that land is destined and ordained for you and for your people."



How Corin became Brute's man; and how king Goffar was discomfitted.

Then when Brute had this answer from Diana, the goddess, anon he let the anchors wind up, and sailed into the high sea. And when he and his men had sailed twenty-two days and more, they found, fast by the coast of the sea, a thousand men of the lineage and kindred of Troy. And their sovereign and their master of all, was called Corin. And when Brute *wist* whence they were, he *tho* took them, with much joy into his ships, and led them forth with him. Then Corin there became Brute's man, and to him did homage.

And so long they sailed forth in the sea, until they came unto Gascoigne; and anon they arrived in the haven of *Lyegres*, and there they dwelled eight days, them for to rest, and their sails to mend there that it was need. Tidings soon came to king Goffar, that

¹ unless.

was lord of that land, how that much people, of strange land, were arrived into his land, in the haven of Lyegres. Wherefore, he was sore angred and annoyed that they came and arrived in his land without his licence and his leave; and anon ordained him a great power for to drive out Brute, and to destroy him and all his people. But it was so, that king Goffar was discomfitted and all his people; and himself fled into France, there for help and succour. And in that time reigned in France twelve kings; and an eleven of them assembled a great power for to help Goffar, and for to fight against Brute. This Goffar dwelled with them of France half a year and more. And in the mean time when Goffar was in France, Brute and his company destroyed all the land of Gascoigne, and let take all the treasure that king Goffar had, and there let bring it all into his ships. And this Brute found in that land a fair place and *covenable*; and there Brute made a fair castle and a strong.

When that this was done, king Goffar came from France, and eleven kings with him, and brought with him twenty thousand men, for to fight with Brute and his company. And Brute had but seven thousand and three hundred men. And nevertheless, when the two hosts met together, Brute's folk, thorough help of himself, and of Turin, his cousin, and of Corin, that well and manly him defended, fought

so till that in little time they had slain of the Frenchmen two thousand and more. Anon, all that were alive fled away. And in this battle Turin, Brute's cousin, was slain. And Brute let inter him worthily, when he had space and leisure, in the castle that he had made, and *tho* let call that castle *Toures*, for because of the name of Turin, that there was interred. And yet, unto this day, there is a noble city, that is called *Toures*.

And [when] king Goffar *wist* that Turin was dead, he came again with his men, and after gave a strong battle unto Brute; but Brute and his men were so weary for fighting, that they might no longer endure, *but to megre*¹, him and all his, And then Brute *yede*² into his castle with his men, and made the gates fast for to save them, and for to take council among them, what were best for to do. Brute and Corin gave council, and ordained prively, that Corin should go out and *bush him*³ in a wood, till on the morn; so that in the morning, when that Brute should fight with his enemies, then Corin should come with his folk, in the one side, and slay and do all the harm that he might. And in a morning, in the dawning of the day, Brute went out of the castle, and fiercely fought with his enemies; and they manly defended them. But within a little time,

¹ without diminishing. ² went. ³ lie in ambuscade.

Brute and his folk slew eight hundred of king Goffar's men.

Then came Corin with the *bushment*¹, and smote to ground, he and his company, all those that would stand or abide. So that the king Goffar and his company were discomfitted. And fast they began to flee, and Brute and Corin, with their company, fiercely them pursued, and slew more of them in the flying, than they did in the battle. And in this manner Brute had the victory. And nevertheless, Brute made much sorrow for his cousin Turin, that there was slain, and other also that he had lost of his men; that is to say, seven hundred and fifteen; the which nobly he interred in the same castle of Toures, there where he had interred Turin, his cousin.



How Brute arrived at Totness in the isle then called Albion, and of the battle that was betwixt Corin and Gogmagog.

So when all this was done, Brute would no longer there dwell, for to fight, nor for to lose no more of his people: for king Goffar's people might every day increase more and more, and Brute's lessen. And, therefore, he took all his men, and went unto

¹ ambuscade.

the sea, and had wind and weather as their will. And the fifth day after, they arrived in an haven at Totness, and came into the isle of Albion. And there neither man nor woman, as the story telleth, they found, but giants. And they dwelled in hills and in caves. And Brute saw the land was fair and at his liking, and was good also for him and for his people, as Diana the goddess had him *behight*¹. And therefore was Brute wonder glad, and let assembled, upon a day, all his folk, to make a solemn sacrifice, and a great feast in honour and reverence of Diana, the goddess ; of the which he had council first for to come into this land. And then, when that they had their solemnity done, as they, upon a day, sat at their meat, there came in upon them thirty giants, and slew of Brute's men thirty. Brute and his men, anon *strete up*², and fought with the giants, and slew them every one, except one, that was called Gogmagog. And he was master of all the giants ; and he was stronger and higher than any other. And Brute kept him : for because that he should wrestle with Corin, that was Brute's man : for he was greater and higher than any of Brute's men, from the *gri-delstede*³, upward.

Gogmagog and Corin, undertook there for to wrestle. And so together they went, and wrestled a long time ; but at the last, Gogmagog held Corin so

¹ foretold ?² started up.³ girdle's place ; the waist.

fast,¹ that he brake two ribs of his side. Wherefore Corin was sore angry. And there he took Gogmagog betwixt his arms, and cast him down upon a rock ; so that Gogmagog brake all to pieces ; and so he died an evil death. And therefore, the place is called unto this day, the *Saute* of Gogmagog.

And then after, Brute gave all that country unto Corin. And there Corin called it after his name, *Cornewayl*. And his men he called *Cornewayles* ; and so should men of that country be called for evermore. And in that country dwelled Corin and his men. And they made towns and houses, and inhabited the land by their own will.



How Brute builded London, and called this land Britain ; and Scotland, Albine ; and Wales, Camber.

Brute and his men went forth, and saw about in divers places, where that they might find a good place and *covenable*, that they might make a city for him and his folk. And so at the last they came by a fair river that is called *Tamys*¹. And there Brute began to build a fair city, and let call it New Troy, in mind and resemblance of the great Troy, from the which place all their lineage was come. And this

¹ *Thames.*

Brute let fell down woods, and let ear and sow lands, and also let mow down meadows, for sustenance of him and his people. And then he *departed*¹ the land to them; so that *everyche*² of them had a part, and a certain place for to dwell in.

And then Brute let call this land Britain, after his own name, and his folk he let call Britons. And this Brute had gotten on his wife Gennogen, three sons, that were worthy of deeds. The first was called Lotrin; the second, Albanak; and the third, Cambar. And Brute bare crown in the city of Troy, twenty year after the time that the city was made. And there he made the laws that the Britons hold. And this Brute was wonderly well beloved among all men. And Brute's sons also loved wonderly well together.

And when Brute had sought all the land in length, and also in breadth, he found a land that joined to Britain, that was in the north; and that land Brute gave to Albanak, his son; and let call it Albany, after his name, that now is called Scotland. And Brute found another country toward the west, and gave that to Cambar, his other son, and let call it Cambar, after his name, and now is called Wales. And when Brute had reigned twenty year, as before is said, then he died in the city of New Troy.

¹ divided.² each.

In the description of Britain, by Harrison, prefixed to Holinshed's Chronicle, the story of the first peopling of this island, is mixed up of partly true, and partly fabulous materials. According to that historian, Britain was at first "a parcel of the Celtic kingdom, whereof *Dis*, otherwise called *Samothés*, one of the sons of Japhet, was the *Saturn*, or original beginner; and of him thenceforth, for a long time, called *Samothea*." He arrived in 1910 from the creation. But the succession of princes descended from the line of Japhet, after having continued during 341 years, was interrupted by the invasion of *Albion*, the son of Neptune, (surnamed Mareoticus,) and *Amphitrite*, who subdued Britain, and imposed on it his own name. His reign, which lasted only seven years, terminated with his life, on the following occasion: *Lestrigo*, the brother of *Albion*, was at this time king of Italy, and about to be invaded by *Hercules* (then in Spain) who had sworn eternal enmity to the whole race of *Osyris*, the grandfather of *Lestrigo*, on account of their tyranny. *Albion*, and his brother *Bergion*, (who was supreme governor of the *Orcades*), joined their forces to aid *Lestrigo* in this extremity. But encountering *Hercules* and his party, at the mouth of

Rhodanus, a terrible conflict ensued, in which the British princes were finally discomfited and slain. The name of Albion, however, remained to the country through a space of 595 years; that is, till the time of Brute, who arrived in 1127 before Christ, (for the author is very accurate in his chronology,) and 2840 after the creation.

The same author, in his fourth chapter, discusses the question, "Whether it is likely that there were ever any giants, inhabiting in this isle?" And after mentioning numerous instances of gigantic remains being found in Britain and elsewhere, he cites the following story from Trallianus, in support of the opinion:—

"In the days of Tiberius, the emperor, (says he,) a corpse was left bare, or laid open, after an earthquake, of which each tooth contained twelve inches over, at the least. Now, forasmuch as in such as be full-mouthed, each chap hath sixteen teeth at the least, which is thirty-two in the whole, needs must that the wideness of this man's chaps be sixteen foot, and the opening of his lips ten. A large mouth in mine opinion, and not to feed with ladies of my time; besides that, if occasion served it was able to receive the whole body of a man,

I mean of such as florish in our days. When this carcass was thus found, every man marvelled at it, and good cause why. A messenger also was sent unto Tiberius, the emperor, to know his pleasure, whether he would have the same brought over unto Rome, or not? but he forbade them; willing his legate not to move the dead out of his resting place, but rather to send him a tooth out of his head; which being done, he gave the same to a cunning workman, commanding him to shape a carcass, of light matter, after the proportion of the tooth, that at the least, by such means, he might satisfy his curious mind, and the phantacies of such as are delighted with news.

“To be short, when the image was once made, and set up an end, it appeared rather an huge collosy, then the true representation of the carcass of a man. And when it had stand in Rome, until the people were weary of it, and thoroughly satisfied with the sight thereof, he caused it to be broken all in pieces, and the tooth sent again to the carcass from whence it came, willing them moreover to cover it diligently, and in any wise not to dismember the corpse, nor from thenceforth to be so hardy as to open the sepulchre any more.”

DESCRIPTION OF ENGLAND.

CAXTON, about three months after his printing the above Chronicles of England, printed a little tract in folio, of the same size with the Chronicles, which he called "The Description of England, Wales, and Scotland, and also Ireland." This book, as before observed, is usually joined with the Chronicles; and was printed from Trevisa's translation of the *Polychronicon*. It was afterwards reprinted with the "*Fructus Temporum*," &c. in the edition of it by Julian Notary, in 1515. The following rubrics are prefixed:

"1. Here followeth a little treatise, the which treateth of the description of this land, which of old time was named Albion, and after Britain, and now is called England; and speaketh of the nobleness and worthyness of the same.

“ 2. It is so, that in many and divers places, the common Chronicles of England are had, and also now late enprinted. And for as much as the description of this land, which of old time was named Albion, and after Britain, is not described, *ne* commonly had, *ne* the noblesse and worthyness of the same, is not known; therefore I intend to set in this book, the description of this said isle of Britain, and with the commodities of the same.”

This description consists of twenty-nine chapters; and it has been observed by bishop Nicholson, in his English Historical Library, “ That from the conquest, down to the reign of king Henry VIII. our English geographers, have either been very few, or the want of printing has occasioned the loss of most of them; and that this of Caxton’s is the only thing in its kind which we have.” Caxton, however, was merely the printer of this book.

On the Laws of the Britons, and the Names of those Laws.

Dunwallo, that *hyghte*¹ Molliuncius, also made first laws in Britain; the which laws were called

¹ is called.

Molliuncius' laws, and were solemnly observed unto William Conqueror's time. Molliuncius ordained among his laws, that cities, temples, and ways that *lead* men thereto, and plowmen's *solowes*, should have privilege and freedom for to save all men that flee thereto for succour and refuge.

Then afterward Mercia, queen of Britons, that was Gwytelinus' wife, (of her the province had the name of Mercia, as some man suppose,) she made a law full of wit and of reason, and was called *Merchene law*. Gildas, that wrote the Chronicles and Histories of the Britons, turned these two laws out of Briton speech, into Latin. And afterward, king *Aluredus* turned all out of Latin into Saxon's speech, and was called *Marchene law*. Also the king *Aluredus* wrote in English, and *put to*¹ another law, that *hight* West Saxon law.

Then afterwards Danes were lords in this land, and so came forth the third law, that *heet* Dane-law. Of these three laws, St. Edward III. made one common law, that yet is called St. Edward's Law.

I hold it well done to write here and expowne many terms of these laws: 1. *Myndebrugh*; hurting of honour and worship; in French, *blessure d'honneur*. —2. *Burbruck*; in French, *blessure de court ou de cloys*. —3. *Grichbruche*; breaking of peace.—4. *Myskenynge*; changing of speech in court.—5. *Shewing*;

¹ added.

setting forth of merchandize.—6. *Hamsoken*, or *Hamfare*, a *rere*¹ made in house.—7. *Forstalling*; wrong, or *bette down*² in the king's highway.—8. *Fritsoken*; surety in defence.—9. *Sak*; forfeit.—10. *Soka*; suit of court; and thereof cometh *Soken*.—11. *Theam*; suit of bondmen.—12. *Fighting-wytte*; amersement for fighting.—13. *Bloodwytte*; amersement for shedding of blood.—14. *Flytwytte*; amends for *chydinge*³ of blood.—15. *Leyrwytte*; amends for lying by a bondwoman.—16. *Gultwytte*; amends for trespass.—17. *Scot*; a *gadrynge to work of bayllyes*.⁴—18. *Hydage*; tallage for hydes of land.—19. *Dane-gheld*; tallage given to the Danes, that was of every *bona taterre*, that is, every ox-land three-pence.—20. A *Wepyintake*, and an *hundred*, is all one: for the country or towns were wont to give up *wepyn*, in the coming of a lord.—21. *Lestage*; custom challenged in *cheapings fares*.—22. *Stallage*; custom for standing in streets in fair time.

¹ The word *rere* probably signifies *breach*.—There is some difference, however, between *Hamsoken* and *Hamfare*. The latter only implies a breach of the peace in a house; the former is the liberty or privilege of a house; or the franchise by which lords of manors were empowered to take cognizance of such violations of the peace.

² beating down,—cheapening?

³ shedding.

⁴ That is—a collection by the bailiff of a manor, of the contribution called *Scot*—an assessment according to the ability of the subject.

The description of Wales is in verse. The information it contains is nearly the same as that already extracted from the *Polychronicon*, and its source was undoubtedly the same; unless, indeed, it were borrowed directly from that Chronicle—a supposition perhaps more probable.

THE FRUIT OF TIMES.

IN the compilation of this Chronicle, the same authorities were probably resorted to, as employed by Gower, in his *Confessio Amantis*; of which the three following are the principal: Cassiodorus, Isidorus, and Godfrey of Viterbo; to which may perhaps be added, the *Gesta Romanorum*. Cassiodorus wrote, at the command of Theodoric king of the Goths, a work named *Chronicon Breve*, beginning from Adam, and descending to the year 519; which was deduced chiefly from Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History, The Chronicles of Prosper and Jerom, with Aurelius Victor's Origin of the Roman Nation. A translation of this Chronicle into Italian, by *Ludovico Dolce*, was printed in 1561.

Isidorus, called Hispalensis, who flourished in the seventh century, framed from the last author, a *Cronicon* from Adam, to the time of the emperor Heraclius, first printed in the

year 1477. This also was translated into Italian, under the title of *Cronica D'Isidoro*, in 1480. It is sometimes called *Chronica de sex Mundi ætatibus*; *Imago Mundi & Abreviatio Temporum*; by the last of which titles, that of *Fructus Temporum*," was probably suggested. It was continued by Isidorus Pacensis, from 610 to 754; which continuation was printed in 1634, fol. Pampelon, under the title *Epitome Imperatorum vel Arabum Ephemeridos unâ cum Hispaniæ Chronico*.

Isidore also wrote a History or Chronicle of the Goths, from the year 176, to the death of king Sisebut, in the year 628. It is to be found in Grotius's *Collectio rerum Gothicarum*, p. 707. Amst. 1655. 8vo.

Godfrey of Viterbo was chaplain and notary to three German emperors, and died in 1190. He compiled in Latin, partly in prose, and partly in verse, a Chronicle, entitled *Pantheon*, or *Memoriæ Seculorum*, which commences, according to the established practice of the historians of the middle ages, with the creation, and is brought down to the year 1186. The subject of the work, in the words of the author, is the Old and New Testament; and all the emperors and kings, which have

existed from the beginning of the world to his own times ; of whom the origin, end, names, and achievements, are commemorated. The authors, to whom this Chronicler is indebted for his materials, are Josephus, Dion Cassius, Strabo, Orosius, Hegesippus, Suetonius, Solinus, and Julius Africanus ; among whom it is observable, there is not one of the purer Roman historians. The same author wrote also another Chronicle, called *Speculum Regum*, or the “ Mirror of Kings,” containing a genealogy of the potentates, Trojan and German, from Noah’s flood, to the reign of the emperor Henry VI. from the Chronicles of Venerable Bede, Eusebius, and Ambrosius.

Warton supposes the oldest edition of *Gesta Romanorum* to be that entitled *Incipiunt Historie Notabiles, collecte ex Gestis Romanorum, et quibusdam aliis libris cum applicationibus eorundem*. It is supposed to have been printed before, or about the year 1473. Several other editions succeeded ; after which, an English translation of it was printed by Wynkyn de Worde, without date ; and afterwards was published, “ A Record of ancient Histories, in Latin, *Gesta Romanorum*, perused, corrected, and bettered, by R. Robinson, Lond. 1577.” This

book is remarkable for containing the story of the Three Casketts, in Shakespear's Merchants of Venice. The facts it records are true and partly fabulous; but the compiler is partly unknown.

As I have extracted so largely from the "English Chronicle," I shall give from this merely the short account of Pope Joan, which is found near the end of the fifth part.

Johannes Anglicus, of the nation of *Majuntin*, about this time was pope. And she was a woman, arrayed in man's garments; but she profitted so in holy scripture, that there was found none like her. Then she was chosen pope; but afterwards she was with child. And when she should have gone openly in procession, she travailed and deceased. And this is the sixth pope, the which to this time had the name of holiness, and were vicious. And this person, as other popes were, was punished of God, ~~ne she was~~ not numbered in the book of popes.

These comprehensive Chronicles, were so multiplied in the middle ages, as to supersede the classics, and other established authors, whose materials they abridged. The plan of

the epitomizers was, to select those stories only which suited the taste of the age ; and thus furnished their co-temporaries with abundance of marvellous and delectable histories, designed less to give information, than to gratify that passion of wonderment, which characterises an uncultivated state of society. These histories, which were totally devoid of taste and appropriate phraseology, contributed greatly to retard the improvement of the language ; and particularly by precluding attention to classical literature, which furnishes the exactest models of refined taste, and of correct and elegant composition. Still, however, it must be admitted, that they had their uses in those rude periods. They had the effect of weaning men's minds from the perusal of legends, the dullness of which is only surpassed by their absurdity ; and of alluring them by degrees to the study of real and rational history. At length was awakened the curiosity to obtain an accurate knowledge of historic transactions, which led to the examination of original authors, the genuine sources of authentic history. There are some reasons too, why the compositions in question ought not to be overlooked even by more polished ages. They

contain curious pictures of the ignorance and credulity of our ancestors ; and what is of still greater consequence, they often preserve facts derived from books which have perished. It is conjectured with reason, that their plan of deducing a perpetual history from the creation to the writer's time, was borrowed partly from Ovid, and partly from the Bible.

THE GOLDEN LEGEND.*Legenda Aurea.*

“ **WHEREIN** been contained all the high and great feasts of our Lord ; the feasts of our blessed Lady ; the lives, passions, and miracles of many other saints ; and other histories and acts. Finished at Westminster, by William Caxton, 1483.”—This is the first edition of the Golden Legend, in English. It was taken (as Caxton himself informs us) from three several books—one in French, called *La Legend d’oree* ; another in Latin ; and a third in English. Hence it appears, that *his* was not the first English version. These different copies varied in divers places. In particular, the Latin and French copies, contained many histories not to be found in the English one. On this account Caxton says, “ I have written one out of the said three books, which I have

ordered otherwise than the said English Legend, which was so tofore made." In the following editions several of the lives and histories are differently disposed. The edition of which we are speaking, begins with the advent, nativity, &c. of our Lord; and has at the end, "The noble History of the Exposition of the Mass, and the Twelve Articles of our Faith," which are wanting in the following editions; but, like the rest, it concludes with "The Life of the holy Bishop Erasmus."

Another edition of this work was printed by Caxton the same year; another by Julian Notary, in 1503; and a fourth, by Wynkin de Worde. In this last edition we are told, that it was stiled, "The Golden Legend," because, "That as gold passeth all other metals in value, so this Legend excelled all other books." We are informed also, that "it hath been diligently amended in divers places, whereas great need was. Finished 27th day of August, the year of our Lord, 1527."

The word *Legend* was employed originally to signify a book, formerly used in the Romish churches, containing the lessons to be read in

divine service. Hence, it was transferred to the lives of saints and martyrs ; because from these Legends, the chapters were read at matins, and in the refectories of the religious houses.

The first known Legend was in Greek, and written by Simon Metaphrastus, in the tenth century. It contained the lives of saints, adapted to every day in the year. The next was the Golden Legend, written in Latin, and containing a collection of the lives of Saints. It was compiled by James de Varase, better known by his Latin name of *J. de Voragine*, vicar-general of the Dominicans, and afterwards archbishop of Genoa, who died in 1298. It was eagerly received into the church, where it maintained its reputation for a period of two hundred years.

The Golden Legend was translated into French by Jehan de Vignay, a monk hospitaller, about the year 1332. It was humourously stiled, by the learned Claude Espence *Legenda Ferrea*, as Thuanus reports ; but his temerity subjected him to a public recantation in the year 1555.

Legend of St. Dominic.

Dominic, was duke of the order of the Friars preachers, and a noble father of the parts of Spain, of a town named Callorega, of the diocese of Oxonyense; and his father was named Felix, and his mother Johane, of whom he came as of the flesh. And his mother tofore that he was born, saw in her sleep that she bare a little whelp in her belly, which bare a *brenning* brønd in his mouth; and when he was issued out of her womb, he *brent* all the world.

And also it seemed to a woman, that was godmother to him at the font, and held him, that the child Dominic had a star right clear in his forehead, which enlumined all the world. * * * * *

And then began he to think of the establishment of his order, and of what office it might be, for to go and preach thro' the world, and for to enhance the Christian faith against the heretics. And when he had dwelled ten year in the parts of Thoulouse, after the death of the bishop of Oxonyense, unto the time that the council should be solemnized at Latranense; then he went to Rome, with Faucon, bishop of Thoulouse, to the council general, for to get of Innocent, the pope, that the order, which is said the order of the preachers, might be confirmed to him and to his successors. And the pope would not lightly accord to this thing. And

then it happened on a night, that the pope saw in a vision, that the church of Latranense was suddenly menaced for to fall and overthrow. And as he beheld it all *aferde*, he saw on that other side, St. Dominic *renning* against it, and sustained and bare it up, and kept it *fro* falling. And then awoke the pope, and understood the vision, and received joyously the petition of the man of God, and bad that he and his brethren should seek some rule approved, and he would confirm it as his will.

And then St. Dominic came to his brethren, and shewed to them what the pope had said; and they were of number about sixteen 'or seventeen friars, which anon called council of the Holy Ghost, and chose the rule of St. Austin, preacher and holy doctor, and would, of one will, be in deed and name preachers; and established therewith some customs more straiter in their living, which they took above, and promised to keep them truly.

In this time, Innocent, the pope, died; and Honorius was made pope, and sovereign bishop of the church; and he gat of the same Honorius, the confirmation of his order, in the year of our Lord, 1216.

• * * * *

There was a scholar in the house of the friars at Boloyne, for to hear mass. And it happened that St. Dominic sang the mass. And when it came to the offering, the scholar went and kissed the hand of

St. Dominic, with great devotion. And when he had kissed it, he felt come out of his hand so great sweetness, and so sweet an odour, as he ever had felt tofore in his life. And *fro* then forth on, the ardour and *brenning* of lechery began to wax cold in him, so that he which tofore had been vain and lecherous, was after so continent, that his flesh shone all of cleanness and chastity. And the flesh of St. Dominic, shone much of great chastity and purity, of whom the odour cured the filths of the thought.

* * * * *

He came to his last hour, in the year of our Lord 1221; and so slept in our Lord Jesu Christ, whose departing out of this world was shewed the same day, and the same hour, to the friar general, then prior, of the preachers of Brixia. And afterward to the bishop of the same city in this manner. For as he slept a light sleep, the head inclined to a wall, he saw the heaven open, and put down to the earth two white ladders, of which Jesu Christ and his mother held the end on high. And the angels descended and ascended, by the ladders, singing. In the midst of the ladders, there was a seat set; and upon the seat sat St. Dominic, with his head covered like a friar. And Jesu Christ and his mother, drew up the ladders into heaven so high, that he that sat was lift up into heaven, and then the opening of heaven was *sheet*¹

¹ shut.

and closed. And then the same friar came to Bologna, and found that the same day, and the same hour, St. Dominic died.

St. Francis, Founder of the Friars Minors.

Francis, servant and friend of Almighty God, was born in the city of *Assyse*, and was made a merchant unto the 25th year of his age, and wasted his time by living vainly, whom our Lord corrected by the scourge of sickness, and suddenly changed him into another man; so that he began to shine by the spirit of prophecy. For on a time, he, with other men of Peruse, was taken prisoner, and were put in a cruel prison, where all the other wailed and sorrowed, and he only was glad and enjoyed. And when they had *reproved*¹ him thereof, he answered—Know ye, said he, that I am joyful: for I shall be worshipped as a saint throughout all the world.

* * * * *

On a time as this holy man was in prayer, the devil called him thrice by his own name. And when the holy man had answered him, he said, none in this world is so great a sinner, but if he convert him, our Lord would pardon him; but who that *sleeth* himself with hard penance, shall never find mercy. And anon, this holy man knew by revela-

¹ reprovèd.

tion the fallacy and deceit of the fiend, how he would have withdrawn him *fro* to do well. And when the devil saw that he might not prevail against him, he tempted him by grievous temptation of the flesh. And when this holy servant of God felt that, he *despoiled*¹ his cloaths, and beat himself right hard with an hard cord, saying, "Thus, brother ass, it behoveth thee to remain and to be beaten." And when the temptation departed not, he went out and plunged himself in the snow, all naked, and made seven great balls of snow, and purposed to have taken them *into*² his body, and said, "This greatest is thy wife; and these four, two *ben* thy daughters, and two thy sons; and the other twain, that one thy *chambrere*, and that other thy *varlet* or *yeman*; haste and clothe them: for they all die for cold. And if thy business that thou hast about them, grieve ye sore, then serve our Lord perfectly. And anon, the devil departed from him all confused; and St. Francis returned again unto his cell, glorifying God. * * * *

He was enobled in his life by many miracles * * and the very death, which is to all men horrible and hateful, he admonished them to praise it. And also he warned and admonished death to come to him, and said, "Death, my sister, welcome be you." And when he came at the last hour, he slept in our

¹ took off.² unto.

Lord ; of whom a friar saw the soul, in manner of a star, like to the moon in quantity, and the sun in clearness.

St. Bernard,

Was born in Bourgoyne, in the castle of Fontaines, of noble lineage and much religious, whose father *hyght* Celestyn, and was a noble knight of the world, and much religious to God. And his mother was named Aleth ; and she had seven children, six males, and one female. And the men children, she nourished all for to be monks, and the daughter for to be a nun, &c. And as she bare the third son in her belly, which was Bernard, she saw in her sleep, a dream, which was a demonstrance of things to come. Her seemed that she had in her belly, a whelp all white and red upon the back, barking in her belly. And when she had told her dream to an holy man, he answered to her prophesying. “ Thou art mother of a right noble whelp, which shall be a warden to the house of God, and shall give great barkings against the enemies : for he shall be a noble preacher, and shall *guarish*¹ by the grace of his tongue. * * * * * * *

And when the ancient enemy saw the good pur-

¹ *guérir* ; cure ?

pose of the child full of health, he bent against him many gins of temptation. And on a time, when that he had holden *eyen*,¹ and fixed them upon a woman, he had anon shame in himself, and was a cruel venger of himself: for he leapt anon into a pond full of water and frozen; and he was therein so long, that almost he was frozen, and by the grace of God, he was cooled from the heat of carnal concupiscence.

About that time, by instigation of the devil, a maid laid her in his bed by him, all naked, there where he slept. And when he felt her, he let her lye in the same side of the bed that she had taken, and turned him to that other side, and slept. And she tarried a space of time, and felt him, and *ketylde*¹ him, and would have drawn him to her entent. And at the last, when she felt him unmoveable, tho' she were unshamefast, yet she was ashamed, and all confused arose and went her way.

Another time, as he was harboured in the house of a lady, she considered the beauty of this young man, and was greatly chafed, and strongly desired his company. And then she ordained a bed out from the other; and in the night she arose without shame, and came secretly to him. And when he felt her, he cried, "thieves! theives!" And she fled and light a candle herself, and sought the thief;

¹ tickled?

and none was found. And then each man went to his bed again; but this unhappy woman rested not; but she arose again, and went to the bed of Bernard, as she did tofore. And he cried again, "thieves! thieves!" And the thief was sought, but he was not found, *ne* published of him, which knew her well. And yet was she chafed the third time; and then with great pain she ceased, what for dread and despair. And on the morrow, as they went by the way, his fellows *reproved* him of that he had so dreamed of thieves, and inquired of him what it was? And he answered, verily, I have suffered this night, the assailings of a thief: for mine hostess enforced to take away *fro* me, treasure not recoverable.

These extracts will suffice to give the reader an idea of the ignorance and superstition which prevailed in the dark ages. Such were the tales invented and propagated by the monks, partly with pious, and partly with politic designs, which they imposed upon the people as genuine history, and which were received by them with eager and devout credulity.

Richard III.

THE BOOK OF
THE ORDER OF CHIVALRY,
 OR
KNIGHTHOOD.

THIS book was translated from the French, and printed by Caxton. It is a thin quarto, and without a date, though it is supposed to have been printed about the year 1484.

It is divided into eight chapters. The 1st shews how a knight, who was a hermit, bestowed this rule, or order of chivalry, upon a squire. The 2d treats of the original of chivalry, or knighthood. 3. Of the office of chivalry. 4. Of the examination that ought to be made of the esquire, when he enters into the order. 5. In what manner the squire ought to receive chivalry. 6. Of the *signefyaunce* of the arms belonging to a knight. 7. Of the customs that appertain to a knight. 8. Of the honours that ought to be done to a knight.

The following is a short abstract of the first chapter, declaring how a good hermit devised to the esquire, the rule and order of chivalry :—

A certain knight, who had grown old in deeds of war, and feats of chivalry, had retired from the world, that he might consecrate the remainder of his days to acts of devotion, in a deep and venerable forest. Some king, “noble, wise, and full of good customs,” having proclaimed a court general, for the purpose of being made himself a new knight, and afterwards of making others, a certain esquire, ambitious of the honour of knighthood, immediately set out on his journey that he may receive it on this illustrious occasion. As he proceeded on his solitary way, he was overcome by the fatigues of his journey ; and falling asleep, his horse deviated from the right tract, and accidentally carried him into the forest inhabited by the hermit-knight.

The hermit, who was offering up his orisons by the side of a fountain, the accustomed scene of his devotions, on perceiving the approach of a horseman, rose, and awaited him under the shadow of a tree ; at the same time reading in a little book placed upon his lap.

The palfrey stopping at the fountain to drink, the esquire suddenly awoke, and having alighted, the old knight approached him, and they both sat down together on the grass. After spending some time in silent expressions of mutual surprise at their unexpected rencontre, the hermit inquired the reason of his visit. Being satisfied as to this point, and moreover, "when the knight heard speak of the knighthood and chivalry, and remembered him of the order of the same, and of that which appertaineth to a knight, he cast out a great sigh, and entered in a great thought, remembering of the honour in which chivalry had been long maintained."

The esquire inquired the cause of his reverie, and being informed, intreated the knight that he would instruct him in the rule and order of knighthood. The knight expressed his surprise that a candidate for the honour of chivalry should have neglected to study its precepts. "I marvel (says he) how thou darest demand chivalry or knighthood, unto the time that thou know the order: for no knight may not love the order, *ne* that which appertaineth to this order, *but if* he can know the defaults that he doth against the order of chi-

valry ; *ne* no knight ought to make any knights, *but if* he himself know the order : for a disordinate knight is he that maketh a knight and cannot shew the order to him, *ne* the custom of chivalry."

The esquire now renewing his request 'to be instructed in the order, "Friend, (said the knight,) the rule and order of chivalry, is written in this little book that I hold here in mine hands, in which I read, and am busy sometime, to the end that it make me remember or think on the grace and bounty that God hath given and done to me in this world ; because that I honoured and maintained with all my power the order of chivalry : for all in like wise as chivalry giveth to a knight all that to him appertaineth, in like wise a knight ought to give all his forces for to honour chivalry."

Having said this, he presented the little book to the esquire, who receiving it with the warmest demonstrations of respect and gratitude, departed on his destined journey.

Of the beginning of Chivalry.—Chap. 22.

When charity, loyalty, truth, justice, and verity fail in the world, then beginneth cruelty, injury,

disloyalty, and falseness. And therefore was error and trouble in the world, in which God hath created man, in intention that of the man he be known and loved, *doubted*¹, served, and honoured. At the beginning, when to the world was come *misprision*², justice returned by dread into honour, in which she was wont to be; and therefore all the people was divided by thousands. And of each thousand was chosen a man most loyal, most strong, and of most noble courage, and better *ensigned*³ and mannered than all the other.

And after was enquired and searched, what beast was most *covenable*, most fair, most courageous, and most strong, to sustain travail, and most able to serve the man. And then was founden that the horse was the most noble, and the most *covenable* to serve man. And because that among all the beasts, the man *chaas*⁴ the horse, and *gaf*⁵ him to this same man that was so chosen among a thousand men: for after the horse, which is called *cheval* in French, is that man named *Chivaller*, which is a knight in English. Thus to the most noble man was given the most noble beast.

It behoveth after this, that there should be chosen all the armours, such as *ben* most noble and most *covenable* to battle, and defend the man *fro* death. And these armours were given and *appropred*⁶ to the knight.

¹ feared.² contempt.³ taught.⁴ chose.⁵ gave.⁶ appropriated.

Then who that will enter into the order of chivalry, he must think on the noble beginning of chivalry. And him behoveth that the *noblesse*¹, of his courage in good customs, accord to the beginning of chivalry: for if it were not so, he should be contrary to his order and his beginnings; and therefore it is not *condemnable* thing that the order of chivalry receive his enemies in honours. * * * * *

Beware thou squire, that *wol* enter into the order of chivalry, what thou shalt do: for if thou be a knight, thou receivest honour and the servitude that must be had unto the friends of chivalry: for of so much as thou hast more noble beginning, and hast more honour, of so much art thou more bond and bounden to be good and agreeable to God, and also to the people. And if thou be wicked, thou art enemy of chivalry, and art contrary to his commandments and honours. So much high, and so much noble is the order of chivalry, that it sufficeth not that there be made knights of the most noble persons, *ne* that there should be given to them the most noble beast, and the best the most noble armours, and the best only; but him behoveth, and it must be, that he be made lord of many men: for in seignory is much *noblesse*; and in servitude, as much of subjections. Then if thou take the order of knighthood, and art a vile man and wicked, thou dost great

¹ nobleness.

injury to all thy subjects, and to thy fellows that *ben* good: for by the *vylete*¹ in which thou art, if thou be wicked, thou oughtest to be put under a serf or bondman; and by the *noblesse* of knights that be good, it is *indigne*², and not worthy, that thou be called a knight.

Election, *ne* horse, *ne* armours suffice, nor yet to the high honour which longeth to a knight; but it behoveth that there be given to him a squire, and servant that may take heed to his horse. And it behoveth also, that the common people labour the lands for to bring fruits and goods, whereof the knight and his beasts have their living; and that the knight rest him, and *be at sejourne* after his *noblesse*, and desport him upon his horse for to hunt, or in other manner after that it shall please him; and that he ease him and delight in things, of which his men have pain and travail.

The clerks study in doctrine and science, how they may *conne know*³ God, and love him and his works, to the end that they give doctrine to the people lay and bestial, by good example, to know, love, serve, and do honour God, our glorious Lord. For to the end that they may ordinally do these things, they follow and ensue the schools. * * *

The science and the school of the order of chivalry is, that the knight make his son to learn, in

¹ vileness. ² unworthy. ³ be able to know.

his youth, to ride: for if he learn not in his youth, he shall never learn it in his old age. And it behoveth that the son of a knight, in the time that he is esquire, can take keeping of horse; and him behoveth that he serve, and that he be first subject, *or*¹ he be lord: for otherwise should he not know the *noblesse* of the seignory, when he should be a knight. And, therefore, every man that will come to knight-hood, him behoveth to learn in his youth, to *carve* at the table; to serve to arm; and to *adoube*² a knight.

* * * * *

So much is high and honoured the order of chivalry, that to a squire, *ne* sufficeth not only to keep horse, and learn to serve a knight, and that he go with him to tourneys and battles; but it is needful that there be holden to him a school of the order of knighthood, and that the science were written in books, and that the art were shewed and read in such manner as other sciences *ben* read; and that the sons of knights learn first the science that appertaineth to the order of chivalry. And after that they were esquires, they should ride thro' divers countries with the knights. And if there were none error in the clerks, and in the knights, *unneth* should there be any in other people: for by the clergy, they should have devotion, and love to God; and by the

¹ ere, before.

² dubb.

knights, they should *doubt*¹ to do wrong, treason and *barate*² the one to another.



Chap. 3—Of the Office of a Knight.

The office of a knight is to maintain and defend the holy faith catholic. * * * * So much noble is chivalry, that every knight ought to be governor of a great country or land; but there *ben* so many knights, that the land may not suffice to signify that one ought to be lord of all things. The emperor ought to be a knight, and lord of all knights; but because that the emperor may not by himself govern all knights; him behoveth that he have under him kings that *ben* knights, to the end that they aid and help to maintain the order of chivalry. And the kings ought to have under them dukes, earls, viscounts, and other lords. And under the barons ought to be knights, which ought to govern them after the ordinance of the barons, which *ben* in the high degree of chivalry tofore named: for to shew the excellence, seignory, power, and wisdom of our Lord God glorious, which is one only God in Trinity, and can and may govern all things. * *

The office of a knight is to maintain and defend

¹ fear.

² barbarity?

his lord worldly or terrene: for a king, *ne* no high baron, hath no power to maintain right wiseness in his men, without aid and help. Then, if any man do against the commandment of his king or prince, it behoveth that the knights aid their lord, which is but a man only as another is; and therefore the evil knight, which sooner helpeth another man ~~that~~ would put down his lord from the seignory that he ought to have upon him, he followeth not the office by which he is called a knight.

By the knights ought to be maintained and kept justice, * * for to maintain the order of knight-hood: then, to *mesprise*¹ and to leave the customs of that which the knight is most apparailled to use—his office—is but despising of the order. And thus, as all these things aforesaid appertain to a knight, as touching his body; in like wise justice, wisdom, charity, loyalty, verity, humility, strength, hope, swiftness, and all other virtues *semblable*² appertain to a knight as touching his soul; and therefore the knight that useth the things that appertain to the order of chivalry, as touching his body, and hath none of these virtues that appertain to chivalry, touching his soul, is not the friend of the order of knighthood: for if it were thus that he made separation of the virtues above-said, saying that they appertain not to the soul, and to the order of chivalry together, it

¹ despise.

² similar.

should signify that the body and chivalry were both two together, contrary to the soul, and to these virtues; and that is false.

The office of a knight is to maintain the land.
* * * * A noble knight that loveth chivalry, how much less he hath aid of his fellows, and less of arms, and less to defend; so much more him behoveth to enforce himself to have the office of a knight by hardiness of a strong courage, and of noble appearance, against them that *ben* contrary to chivalry. And if he die to maintain chivalry, then he acquireth chivalry in that in which he may the better love and serve it: for chivalry abideth not so agreeably in no place as in *noblesse* of courage. And no man may more honour and love chivalry, *ne* more for him may not be *do*¹ than that dieth for love, and for to honour the order of chivalry.

Chivalry and hardiness may not accord without wit and discretion. And if it were thus that folly and ignorance accorded thereto, wit and discretion should be contrary to the order of chivalry; and that is thing impossible: by which is openly signified to the knight, that thou hast great love to the order of chivalry, that all in likewise as chivalry by *noblesse* of courage hath made thee to have hardiness, so that thou *doubtest*² no peril, *ne* death, because thou mightest honour chivalry; in likewise it behoveth,

¹ done.

² dreadest.

that the order of chivalry make thee to love wisdom, by which thou mayst love and honour the order of chivalry, against the disordinance and default that is in them that *wene*¹ to ensue and follow the order of chivalry by folly and ignorance, and without *entendment*².

The office of a knight is to maintain and defend women, widows, and orphans, and men diseased, and not puissant *ne* strong. For, like as custom and reason is, that the greatest and most mighty, help the feeble and less, and that they have recourse to the great; right so is the order of chivalry; because she is great, honourable, and mighty, *be*³ in succour, and in aid to them that *ben* under him, and less mighty and less honoured than he is.

Then, as it is so, that for to do wrong and force to women, widows that have need of aid, and orphelins that have need of governance; and to rot and destroy the feeble that have need of strength; and to take away from them that is given to them—these things may not accord to the order of chivalry: for this is wickedness, cruelty, and tyranny. And the knight that instead of these vices is full of virtues, he is *digne* and worthy to have the order of chivalry.

* * * * *

The office of a knight is to have a castle and horse for to keep the ways, and for to defend them

¹ think.

² thought.

³ being?

that labour the lands and the earth. And they ought to have towns and cities for to hold right to the people, and for to assemble in a place men of many divers crafts, which *ben* much necessary to the ordinance of this world, to keep and maintain the life of man and of woman. * * * *

The office of a knight is also to ensearch for thieves, robbers, and other wicked folk, for to make them to be punished. * * And because that God and chivalry concord together, it behoveth that false swearing, and untrue oath be not in them that maintain the order of chivalry. And if lechery and justice, accorded together, chivalry, which accordeth to justice, should accord to lechery; and if chivalry and lechery accorded, chastity, which is contrary to lechery, should be against the honour of chivalry. And if it were so, that for to maintain lechery, knights were honoured in maintaining chivalry; seen that lechery and justice been contrary, and that chivalry is ordained for to maintain justice.

The knight ought, and should be just and totally *contrary*¹ to the end, wherefore the order of knight-hood was first established. And if justice and humility were contrary, chivalry, which accordeth him not to justice, should be contrary to humility. And if he accordeth him to pride, he should be contrary to humility. And then, if a knight, inasmuch as

¹ directed towards.

he is proud, maintained chivalry, he corrupteth his order, which was begun by justice and humility, for to sustain the humble, and against the proud: for if it were so, the knights that now *ben*, should not *ber* in that order in which they were first knights; but all the knights now injurious and proud, full of wickedness, be not worthy to chivalry, but oughten to be reputed for nought. * * * *



Of the Customs that appertain to a Knight.—Chap. 7.

The *noblesse* of courage has chosen a knight to be above all other men that *ben* under him in servitude. Then *noblesse* of customs and good nourishments appertain to a knight: for *noblesse* of courage may not mount in the high honour of chivalry, without election of virtues and good customs. Then, as it is so, it behoveth of force to a knight, that he be replenished of good customs, and of good *enseignments*¹. Every knight ought to know the seven virtues, which *ben* beginning and root of all good customs, and *ben* the way and path of the celestial glory perdurable. Of which seven virtues, the three *ben* theological, or divine; and the other four *ben* cardinal. The theological *ben* faith, hope, and charity; the cardinal *ben* justice, prudence, strength, and temperance.

* * * *

¹ instructions.

To a knight appertaineth that he be lover of common weal ; for by the commonalty of the people was the chivalry founden and established. And the common weal is greater and more necessary than proper good and special.

To a knight appertaineth to speak nobly and courteously ; and to have fair harness, and to be well clad, and to hold a good household, and an honest house : for all these things *ben* to honour chivalry necessary. Courtesy and chivalry accorden together : for villainous and foul words *ben* against the order of chivalry. *Privalty*¹ and acquaintance of good folk, loyalty and truth, hardiness, *largess*², honesty, humility, pity, and the other things *semblable* to these, appertain to chivalry.

At the end is an epilogue of Caxton, who, after explaining the origin of the translation, breaks forth into an enthusiastic commendation of chivalry. It is worth transcribing :—

Here endeth the book of “The Order of Chivalry,” which book is translated out of French into English, at a request of a gentle and noble esquire, by me, William Caxton, dwelling in Westminster, beside

¹ *intimacy*.

² *beneficence*.

London, in the most best wise that God hath suffered me, and according to the copy, that the said squire delivered to me. Which book is not requisite to every common man to have; but to noble gentlemen, that by their virtue intend to come and enter into the noble order of chivalry, the which, in these late days, hath been used according to this book heretofore written, but forgotten; and by the exercises of chivalry, not used, honoured, *ne* exercised, as it hath been in ancient time, at which time, the noble acts of the knights of England, that used chivalry, were renowned thro' the universal world. As for to speak tofore the incarnation of Jesus Christ, where were there ever any like to Brennius and Belinus, that from the Great Britain, now called England, unto Rome, and far beyond, conquered many *royammes*¹ and lands, whose noble acts remain in the old histories of the Romans. And *syth* the incarnation of our Lord, behold that noble king of Britain, king Arthur, with all the noble knights of the Round Table, whose noble acts and noble chivalry of his knights occupy so many large volumes, that is a world, or as thing incredible to believe. O ye knights of England! where is the custom and usage of noble chivalry, that was used in *tho* days? What do you now but go to the *baynes*² and play at dice? And some not well advised, use not honest

¹ kingdoms.² baths, or bagnios.

and good rule, *ageyn*¹ all order of knighthood. Leave this, leave it, and read the noble volumes of St. Grael, of Lancelot, of Galaad, of Tristram, of Perseforest, of Percyval, of Gawain, and many *mo*². There shall ye see manhood, courtesy, and gentleness. And look in latter days of the noble acts *syth* the conquest, as in king Richard's days, Cœur de Lion; Edward I. and III. and his noble sons; sir Robert Knolles, sir John Hawkewoode, sir John Chaundos, and sir Gaultier Manny. Read Froissart. And also behold that victorious and noble king Harry V. and the captains under him; his noble brethren; the earl of Salisbury, Montague, and many other, whose names shine gloriously by their virtuous nobleness and acts that they did in honour of the order of chivalry. Alas! what do ye but sleep and take ease, and are all disordered from chivalry. How many knights *ben* there now in England, that have the use and the exercise of a knight? That is to wit, that he knoweth his horse, and his horse him? That is to say, he being ready at a point, to have all thing that longeth to a knight; an horse that is according and broken after his hand; his armours and harness meet and fitting, and so forth? I suppose, an a due search should be made, there should be many found that lack. The more the pity is. I would it pleased our sovereign lord, that twice, or thrice

¹ against.² more.

in a year, or at least once, he would do cry *Iustes of Pees*, to the end that every knight should have horse and harness, and also the use and craft of a knight, and also to tourney one against one, or two against two, and the best to have a price, a diamond or jewel, such as should please the prince. This should cause gentlemen to resort to the ancient customs of chivalry, to great fame and renown; and also to be alway ready to serve their prince, when he shall call them or have need. Then let every man that is come of noble blood, and intendeth to come to the noble order of chivalry, read this little book, and do thereafter, in keeping the lore and commandments therein comprised; and then, I doubt not, he shall attain to the order of chivalry, *et cetera*.

This book Caxton presents to his dread sovereign lord king Richard, king of England and France, that he may command the same to be read to the lords, knights, and gentlemen within this realm, that (as he says) the said noble order of chivalry may be hereafter better practised and honoured than it had been of late times,

MORTE ARTHUR.

THE title of this book at full length is—"The Birth, Life, and Acts of King Arthur; of his noble Knights of the Round Table; their marvellous Enquests and Adventures; the achieving of the *Sangreal*; and in the end, *La Mort d'Arthur*; with the dolorous death and departing out of this world of them all: which book was reduced to the English by sir Thomas Malory, knight; and by me, William Caxton, divided into twenty-one books; chaptered and emprinted and finished in the abbey of Westminster, the last day of July, the year of our Lord 1485," being about a month before the battle of Bosworth, in which Richard III. was slain.

If we are to credit Leland, and others after him, sir Thomas Malory was a Welchman; and from the legendary cast of some of the stories, he was probably a priest. The history of king Arthur, who died in 542, occupies the

seventh book of Geoffrey of Monmouth ; which undoubtedly furnished the ground work of the romance in question. The superstructure was completed by materials derived from MSS. written in the French and Welch, concerning the said king Arthur and his knights ; perhaps with some additions by the compiler.

The Prologue.

After that I had accomplished and finished divers histories, as well of contemplation, as of other historial and worldly acts of great conquerors and princes, and also certain books of ensamples and doctrine, many noble and divers gentlemen of this realm of England, came and demanded me many and oft times, wherefore that I have not do made and emprint the noble history of Sangreal, and of the most renowned Christian king, (first and chief of the three best Christian and worthy) king Arthur, which ought most to be remembered among us Englishmen, tofore all other Christian kings ; for it is *notoirly*¹ knowen through the universal world, that there been nine worthy, and the best that ever were ; that is to wylte, three Paynims, three Jews, and three Christian men. As for the Paynims, they were tofore the in-

¹ notoriously.

carnation of Christ, which were named, the first, Hector of Troy, of whom the history is comen, both in ballad and in prose; the second, Alexander the Great; and the third, Julius Cæsar, emperor of Rome, of whom the histories been well knowen and had. And as for the three Jews, which also were tofore the incarnation of our Lord, of whom the first was duke Joshua, which brought the children of Israel into the land of behest; the second, David, king of Jerusalem; and the third, Judas Macabeus. Of these three the Bible rehearseth all their noble histories and acts. And *syth* the said incarnation have been, three noble Christian men *stalled* and *amytte*d through the universal world, in to the number nine, best and worthy of whom was Tyra, the noble Arthur, whose noble acts I purpose to write in this present book here following; the second was Charlemagne, or Charles the Great, of whom the history is had in many places, both in French and English; and the third and last, Godfrey of Bologne, of whose acts and life I made a book unto the excellent prince Edward the Fourth. The said noble gentlemen instantly required me to enprint the story of the said noble king and conqueror, king Arthur, and of his knights, with the history of the Sangreal, and of the death and ending of the said king Arthur; affirming that I ought rather to enprint his acts and noble feats, than of Godfrey of Bologne, or any of the other

eight, considering that he was a man born within this realm, and king and emperor of the same, and that there been in French divers and many noble volumes of his acts, and also of his knights; to whom I have answered, that divers men hold opinion that there was no such Arthur, and that all such books as been made of him, be but feigned and fables, by cause that some Chronicles make of him no mention, ne remember him nothing, ne of his knights. Whereto they answered, and one in special said, that in him that should say or think that there was never such a king called Arthur, might be *aryttyd* great folly and blindness: for he said, that there were many evidence of the contrary. First, ye may see his sepulture in the monastery of Glastonbury. And also in *Polycronicon*, in the fifth book, and the sixth chapter; and in the seventh book, the thirteenth chapter, where his body was buried, and after found and translated into the said monastery. Ye shall see also in the history of Bochas, in his book *De Casu Principum*, part of his noble acts, and also of his fall. Also Galfridus, in his British book, recounteth his life; and in divers places of England, many remembrances been yet of him, and shall remain perpetually of him, and also of his knights. First in the abbey of Westminster, at Saint Edward's shrine remaineth the print of his seal in red wax, closed in beryl, in which is written *Patricius, Arthurus, Britan-*

zie, Galie, Germanie, Dacie *imperator*. Also in the castle of Dover, ye may see Gawain's skull, and Cradoc's mantle. At Winchester, the round table. In other places, Lancelot's sword; and many other things. Then all these things consider, there can no man reasonably gainsay but there was a king of this land named Arthur: for in all places Christian and heathen, he is reputed and taken for one of the nine worthy, and the first of the three Christian men. And also he is more spoken of beyond the sea, *mo* books made of his noble acts than there been in England, as well in Dutch, Italian, Spanish, and Greekish, as in French. And yet of record remain in witness of him in Wales, in the town of Camelot, the great stones and marvellous works of iron lying under the ground and royal vaults, which divers now have seen. Wherefore it is a marvel why he is no more renowned in his own country, *sauz*¹ only that it accordeth to the word of God, which saith, That no man is accept for a prophet in his own country. Then all these things foresaid alledged, I could not well deny but that there was such a noble king named Arthur, and reputed one of the nine worthy, and first and chief of the Christian men. And many noble volumes been made of him and of his noble knights in French, which I have seen and read beyond the sea, which been not had in our maternal tongue,

¹ save.

But in Welch been many, and also in French, and some in English, but no where nigh all. Wherefore such as have been late drawn out briefly into English, I have, after my simple cunning that God hath sent to me, under the favour and correction of all noble lords and gentlemen, enprised to enprint a book of the noble histories of the said king Arthur, and of certain of his knights, after a copy unto me delivered, which copy sir Thomas Malory took out of certain books of French, and reduced it into English. And I, according to my copy, have done set it in enprint, to the entent that noble men may see and read the noble acts of chivalry; the gentle and virtuous deeds that some knights used in those days, by which they came to honour; and how they that were vicious were punished, and oft put to shame and rebuke; humbly beseeching all noble lords and ladies, with all other estates or commonalty, of what estate or degree they been of, that shall see and read this same book and work, that they take and entend to the good and honest acts in their remembrance, and to follow those same wherein they shall well find many joyous and pleasant histories, and the noble and renowned acts of humanity and gentleness, and chivalries; for herein may be seen noble chivalry, courtesey, humanity, friendliness, hardiness, love, friendship, cowards, murder, hate, virtue, and sin; do after the good, and leave the evil, and it shall

bring you to good fame and renown. And for to pass the time this book shall be pleasant to read it ; but for to give faith and belief, that all is true that is contained therein, ye be at your liberty. But all is written for our doctrine, and for to beware that we fall not to vice, *ne* sin, but to exercise and follow virtue, by which we may come and attain to good fame and renown in this life, and after this short and transitory life, to come unto everlasting bliss in heaven, the which he grant us that reigneth in the heaven, the blessed Trinity. Amen.

Then to proceed forth in this said book, which I direct unto all noble princes, lords and ladies, gentlemen or gentlewomen, that desire to read, or hear read of the noble and joyous history of the great conqueror and excellent king Arthur, sometime king of this noble realm then called Britain, I William Caxton, simple person, present this book following, which I have enprised to enprint ; and treateth of the noble acts, feats of arms, of chivalry, prowess, hardiness, humanity, love, courtesy, and very gentleness ; with many wonderful histories and adventures. And for to understand briefly the content of this volume, I have divided it into 21 books, and every book chaptered, as hereafter shall, by God's grace, follow.

The blowing of the horn, in the beginning of the following passage, furnishes a fine instance of the sublime, founded on particular costume.

Chap. 22.

So he rode forth, and within three days he came by a cross, and thereon was letters of gold written, that said, It is not for a knight alone to ride toward this castle. Then saw he an old hoar gentleman coming toward him, that said, Balin le Savage, thou passest thy bounds this way, therefore turn again and it will avail thee. And he vanished away anon; and so he heard an horn blow as it had been the death of a beast. That blast, said Balin, is blown for me; for I am the prize, and yet am I not dead. And therewith he saw an hundred ladies, and many knights that welcomed him with fair semblant, and made him passing good cheer unto his sight, and led him into the castle, and there was dancing and minstrelsy, and all manner of joy. Then the chief lady of the castle said, Knight with the two swords, he must have ado and just with a knight hereby, that keepeth an island: for there may no man pass this way, but he must just or¹ he pass. That is an unhappy custom, said Balin,

¹ ere, before.

that a knight may not pass this way, *but if* he just. 'Ye shall have ado but with one knight,' said the lady. Well, said Balin, *sith* I shall, thereto am I ready; but travelling men are often weary, and their horses also; but tho' my horse be weary, my heart is not weary. I would be fain there my death should be. Sir, (said a knight to Balin,) me thinketh your shield is not good, I will lend you a bigger. 'Thereof I pray you; and so took the shield that was unknown, and left his own, and so rode unto the island, and put him and his horse in a great boat; and when he came on the other side, he met with a damsel, and she said, O knight Balin, why have you left your own shield? Alas! ye have put yourself in great danger! for by your shield you should have been known; it is great pity of you as ever was of knight: for of prowess and hardiness thou hast no fellow living.

Me repenteth, said Balin, that ever I came within this country; but I may not turn again for shame; and what adventure shall fall to me, be it life or death, I will take the adventure that shall come to me. And then he looked on his armour, and understood he was well armed, and therewith blessed him, and mounted upon his horse.

Chap. 43.

How Balin met with his brother Balan ; and how each of them slew other unknown till they were wounded to death.

Then afore him he saw come riding out of a castle, a knight and his horse, trapped all in red, and himself in the same colour. And when this knight in the red beheld Balin, him thought it should be his brother Balin, because of his two swords ; but because he knew not his shield, he deemed that it should not be he. And so they aventured their spears, and came marvellously fast together, and smote either other in the shields ; but their spears and their course was so big, that it bare down horse and man, so that they lay both in a swoon ; but Balin was sore bruised with the fall of his horse : for he was weary of travail. And Balan was the first that rose on foot, and drew his sword, and went toward Balin, and he arose and went against him ; but Balan smote Balin first, and he put up his shield, and smote him thro' the shield, and brake his helm. Then Balin smote him again with that unhappy sword, and well nigh had felled his brother Balan ; and so they fought there together till their breaths failed. Then Balin looked up to the castle, and saw the towers stand full of ladies. So they

went to battle again, and wounded each other grievously, and then they breathed oftentime, and so went to battle, that all the place there as they fought was red of their blood. And at that time, there was none of them both but they had smitten either other seven great wounds, so that the least of them might have been the death of the mightiest giant in the world. Then they went to battle again so marvellously, that doubt it was to hear of that battle for the great blood-shedding; and their hauberts unnailed, that naked they were on every side. At the last Balan, the younger brother, withdrew him a little and laid him down. Then said le Savage, What knight art thou: for or now, I found never no knight that matched me? My name is, said he, Balan, brother to the good knight Balin. Alas! said Balin, that ever I should see this day; and therewith he fell backward in a swoon. Then Balan went on all four feet and hands, and put off the helm of his brother, and might not know him by the visage, it was so full hewn and bebled; but when he awoke, he said, O Balan, my brother! thou hast slain me, and I thee. Wherefore all the wide world shall speak of us both.

Alas! said Balan, that ever I saw this day, that thro' mishap, I might not know you: for I espied well your two swords; but because ye had another shield, I deemed you had been another knight.

Alas! said Balin, all [that made an unhappy knight in the castle: for he caused me to leave mine own shield, to the destruction of us both; and if I might live, I would destroy that castle for the ill customs. That were well done, said Balan, for I had never grace to depart from them *sith* that I came hither: for here it happened me to slay a knight that kept this island, and *sith* might I never depart; and no more should ye, brother; and ye might have slain me as ye have, and escaped yourself with your life. Right so came the lady of the tower, with four knights and six ladies, and six yeomen unto them; and there she heard how they made their moan either to other, and said, We came both out of one womb, that is to say, mother's belly; and so shall we lie both in one pit. So Balan prayed the lady of her gentleness for his true service, that she would bury them both in that place where the battle was done. And she granted them with weeping cheer, and said it should be done richly, and in the best manner. Now will ye send for a priest, that we may receive the sacrament and blessed body of our Lord Jesus Christ? Yea, said the lady, it shall be done. And so she sent for a priest and gave them their rights. Now, said Balin, when we are buried in one tomb, and the mention made over us how two brethren slew each other, there will never good knight, nor good man see our

tomb, but they will pray for our souls. And so all the ladies and gentlewomen wept for pity. And anon, Balan died; but Balin died not till the midnight after, and so were buried both; and the lady let make a mention of Balan, how he was there slain by the hands of his own brother; and she knew not Balin's name.

The speech of sir Bohort, towards the end, over the dead body of sir Lancelot, has been often quoted as the perfect character of a knight errant:

And now I dare say, that sir Lancelot, there thou liest, thou were never matched of none earthly knight's hands. And thou were the curteist knight that ever bare shield. And thou were the truest friend to thy lover that ever bestrode horse; and thou were the truest lover of a sinful man, that ever loved woman. And thou were the kindest man that ever stroke with sword. And thou were the goodliest person that ever came among *prece*¹ of knights. And thou were the meekest man, and the gentlest that ever ate in hall among ladies. And thou were the sternest knight to thy mortal foe that ever put spear in rest.

¹ press.

Henry VII.

THE BOOK OF
THE FEATS OF ARMS,
 AND OF
CHIVALRY.

THIS book was written by Christina, who was born at Pisa, in Italy; hence she is commonly called Christina of Pisa; but removing with her father to Bologna, in France, she wrote in the language of that country. She flourished about the year 1400.

Her book was translated into English, and printed by Caxton, fol. in 1489. It was collected from Frontinus, Vegetius, and the *Arbre* of Battles; to which she added "many other things requisite to war," &c.

At the end, Caxton says that this book "was delivered to him by that prince (Henry VII.) in his palace of Westminster, the 23d of Ja-

first coming, institutest and gavest manner and order to arrange battles, and to assail and fight in manner—adored lady and high goddess ! be not displeased, that I, simple and little woman, like as nothing unto the greatness of thy renown in *cunning*¹, dare presently *comprise*² to speak of so magnific an office, as is the office of arms ; of which first in the said renowned country of Greece, thou gavest the usage. And in so much it may please thee to be to me favourable, that I may be somewhat consonant in the nation where thou was born, which as then was named the 'Great Greece, the country beyond the Alpes, or mountains *Puyllé*³ and *Callabre*⁴, in Italy, where you were born. And I am, as you were, a woman Italian.



The chapters towards the end, which treat of the trial of right *by single combat within the lists*, as allowed and ordained by the Imperial and Lombard laws, are justly considered as the most curious part of the book.

¹ intelligence.

² undertake.

³ Apulia?

⁴ Calabria.

Book 4.—Chap. 8.

*For what causes the law Imperial did ordain the Champ
of Battle.*

But because that the *diffenses*¹ abovesaid, of the right written, have not be always observed, nor kept, nor yet be not obeyed in all *royalmes*, as touching for to fight in *champ* of battle, as it is said; I shall tell the causes for the which they that did set it up have judged it to be *doo*, that is to wit, the emperor Frederic, that so much contraried holy church, that he chased the pope out of his place, that time when he came to his refuge and succour toward the king of France. And also another scripture that men call the Lombardish law, deviseth thereof in divers cases; the which hereafter shall be declared by me unto thee,

First, The said emperor's law saith, If a man be accused of treason, that he have machined, purchased, procured, or conspired against his prince, or against his city, or else to the prejudice of the common weal, whatsoever the case be, of which the truth cannot be by no proofs known; and that this man so accused offereth to defend and purge himself by *champ* of battle, against all men that *wol* say against

1 prohibitions.

him; shall be received to do the said *champ* of battle.

Item.—That if a prisoner of war be kept in prison by the party adverse, and that it happeth during the said prisonment that peace be made betwixt the two parties, under condition that all manner of prisoners shall be delivered safe again, without paying of any ransom; wherefore it may haply fall, that the master *sleeth* his prisoner: for which misdeed, by right he may *lese*¹ his head, and he be reproved and attainted thereof; whereupon he saith that he slew him in his defence, and that first of all the prisoner had *other*² *traitously*³, or by some otherwise assailed, when they were but them two together; and this he *wol* make good by good proof of his own body, in a *champ* of battle; if any man were that would say contrary against him, he ought to be received.

Item.—Also it saith, as by such a *fall*⁴, we put case that the king of France and the king of England had truce together, and that it should hap a Frenchman during this time, to wound and hurt full sore an Englishman, or an Englishman a Frenchman; of the which thing that law saith, that in such a case behoveth of right and justice a greater *punition*⁵ to him that hath hurted that other, than if he had done the same to one of his own country: If

¹ lose.

² either.

³ traitorously.

⁴ event, accident.

⁵ punishment.

he that this wrong hath done, would bear it out by the proof of his own body, that this was done of him in his defence against that other that first had assailed him—his words by the said law Imperial, ought to be heard.

Item.—If a man accuseth another that he would have had slain the king or the prince, by poisons or otherwise; and that other saith that he lyeth falsely, and for the same called him to *champ* of battle, he is holden by the same law Imperial, to answer him and keep him, the day that he shall set for to fight with him.

Chap. 9.

For what causes did ordain the Lombardish law Champ of Battle.

So is there another law that is called the Law of Lombardy; wherein be comprised many divers things; and in the same by especial, the masters that stablished it have thereupon written many causes to which men may give *gage* for to fight in *champ* of battle. And out of the same laws are come almost all the judgments of giving of *gage*; that is to say, a token of defiance for to befight his enemy within a close field, which men call *champ* of

battle. So shall I tell thee some of those causes, that is to *wite*; If a man accuseth his wife, that she hath treated or bespoken for to make him die, *other* by poison, or by some other secret death whereof by some colour, he hath her in suspicion; but she cannot be to the truth truly attainted: or else when the husband is dead, and his kinsmen putteth upon his wife, that she hath made him to be brought to death—if this woman can find a kinsman of her's, or some other friend that will fight for her, bearing out that that which is laid upon her, is falsely said, the Lombardish law will that he shall be received for to fight for her, against whomsoever will blame her.

Item.—If a man were accused that he had slain another, and that this could not be proved against him; if he casteth his *gage* against him that accuseth him, the law will that he be received.

Item.—*Semblably*¹, if he had beat a man under assurance.

Item.—If a man have slain another man, both all alone, and that he *woll* make a proof by *gage* of his body, that it was in his defencing, and that the other assailed him first; the said law will that he shall be heard.

Item.—If a man, after the decease of some kinsman of his, of whom he ought to have the goods by succession, as next kin, were accused to have slain

¹ in like manner.

him, for to have his livelihood and his goods, he may defend himself thereof by his body, after the form aforesaid.

Item.—If a man were put upon, and accused to have lain with a man's wife, the which case, after this law, if her husband or kinsman complain to the justice, is capital death; that is to say, worthy to lose his head for the same; the said law will that this man *shall mowe*¹ [to] defend himself by *gage* of battle.

Item.—In likewise it is of a man's daughter, being yet under the rule of her parents; if they do complain of some man that hath had fellowship with her, tho' it was with her good will; this law will that he die, *but if* he defend himself thereof by *champ* of battle, in case the thing were so secretly kept that it might not be proved against him: for if manifest or openly known it were, (if the kinsmen will,) there were no remedy. And therefore this law should seem well strange in France, and in other place, that a man should die for such a case, seeing that it was by the good will of the woman, wedded or not wedded. And this law is upon such a reason founded, where it is truth that a man taketh death by sentence of the law or of justice, for to have committed a small theft of gold or of silver, a jewel or other thing: of which case whatsoever necessity

¹ may; i. e. shall be empowered.

hath brought him thereto, shall not *mowe excuse* him, but that justice shall keep upon him her rigour, if grace, for respect of some piteous case, be not to him imparted and made. Why then shall be spared he that hath despoiled and taken away the honour and worship not only of a woman alone, but of her husband, and of both their lineages? And because that where this folk that first made and stablished these laws, praise and set much more by worship, than they did of gold nor of silver; they concluded that yet much more ought to have deserved death, he that robbed another of the aforesaid honour, whereby all a whole kindred is reprovèd, than if he had taken from them whatsoever other thing; and therefore some did say that the law was yet well gracious and piteous to them, when such folk were not more cruelly punished than other that were worthy of death; that is to wit, that it made them not to die of a more cruel death, than for another case.

Another case putteth the said law, that should seem all enough against reason. That is to wit, that if a man had stolen certain *lifelode*¹, house or land, or namely, moveable goods, the space of thirty year, or more; and that another should accuse him that through evil and deceivable means he had it, and falsely had possessed it; that if this accuser offered to prove the same only by his body in *champ*

¹ livelihood, lifehold.

of battle, he shall be received thereunto. But without fail, notwithstanding this law, I tell thee well, that foolish is he that such law accepteth, or such gage. And he that is thereunto called, and that already hath the possession in hand, might answer thus to that other: Fair friend, I have nought to do with thy gage. Fight thyself all alone, if you seem it good: for I shall never fight for this cause. So is there no law that may gainsay him in this case: for prescription is approved of all right.

Item.—Saith the same law, that if it happed two men to fall a-debate together, and that their question were brought to judgment, where both of them should produce or bring forth their proofs, to this intention, that if the one party would gainsay the other, and that they could not accord; if he will make it good by proof of his body, he shall be received.

Item.—If a man taketh an action upon another for certain sum of silver or some jewel, or of some other moveable good, which as he said he lent to his father or mother, and that other denieth him the same; he shall also be received against the other to do *champ* of battle; if he proffereth to make it good by the same mean.

Item.—If a man hath *be*¹ brought to loss and damage by fortune of fire in his house, or in his grange,

¹ been.

or other thing; if he will prove against another in manner aforesaid, that he hath put the fire therein, he shall be heard.

Item.—If a man complaineth over his wife, that she is no good woman; tho' he do this for a will for to close her within a wall, or for to be quit of her, or that she should be banished from her dowry; she may defend hereof herself, if she can find a champion that will fight against her husband for her; and if the husband refuseth him, he shall not be believed.

Item.—If a man haunteth in the house of a wedded man, if the husband will say that this man hath haunted, and haunteth for to have a-do with his wife, for to shame her and him; this other man that so haunteth there may defend him against the husband by *gage* of battle. Whereof I do laugh, considering such a folly; that if the fellow that is so accused were great and strong, it were well bestowed, if he feel himself innocent, that he should beat well and thrifly in the *champ*, that jealous and foolish husband.

Item.—If a man accuseth another, that he hath perjured himself in judgment; he that is so accused may gainsay it, as it is said.

Many other things containeth the said law that concernen *champ* of battle, which I leave for shortness of the matter, as a thing not needful more for to

say. But so much is to be understand, that these battles are sometime done by the principal persons, when a reasonable case of some *letting* falleth there. As it were. If a man too young were accused, or a man that were too old, or a man that had some sickness, or that were impotent, and could not help himself, and sometime a woman, and all such other persons; the which things are all enough expressed and named in the said laws; and namely, if a bondman said that his lord had made him free of his bond and servitude, and this he will make good by his body, the lord is not holden to receive battle therefore; but ought to deliver him a champion. And more it saith, that two clerks of like degree, may have leave to fight each other in *champ* of battle. Of the which thing *sauffe*¹ her grace, I say that she hath wrong to intermit herself in such a case of any man of the church: for the canon that ought more to be obeyed, *defendeth* them expressly all manner of battle and violent hurt. And I ask thee, if a man impotent as it is said, may set for himself such a champion as shall please him. I answer thee, that the champions that be committed for another are, in this deed of battle, figured, or in figure of procurors and advocates of plea; which office every man may do for another if he will, if right expressly gainsayeth it not. Right even

¹ save.

so it is of the champions : for whatsoever will, he may be one, so that right gainsay him not for some cause : for a thief, or some other, that tofore had committed some great evil or crime, should not be received thereto, nor no man that is known of evil fame. And the reason is good ; that is to wit, that if such a man entered a *champ* of battle for another, and were vanquished there, men should *wene* that it had been for his own sins ; and that therefore he had lost the battle.



This book, together with the "Order of Chivalry," above treated of, and another entitled, the "Knight of the Tower," contain, I apprehend, the greater part of the *doctrines* of Chivalry. The "Knight of the Tower," relates chiefly to the education and conduct of women. The books are all very curious, and obviously require republication.

ROMANCE.

ON account of the supposed immoral tendency of Romances, a very severe censure has been passed upon them by the famous Roger Ascham. He says that " In our forefathers' time, when papistry, as a standing pool, covered and overflowed all England, few books were read in our tongue, saving certain books of chivalry, as they said, for pastime and pleasure ; which, as some say, were made in monasteries, by idle monks, or wanton canons : for example, *Morte Arthur*, the whole pleasure of which book standeth in two special points—in open man-slaughter and bold bawdry. In which book, those be counted the noblest knights that kill most men without any quarrel, and commit foulest adulteries by subtlest shifts : as sir Lancelot, with the wife of king Arthur, his master ; sir Tristram, with the wife of king Mack, his uncle ; sir Lamerock, with the wife

of king Lote, that was his own aunt. This is good stuff for wise men to laugh at, or honest men to take pleasure in. Yet (says he) I know when God's Bible was banished the court, and *Morte Arthur* received into the prince's chamber."

Though we should refuse to subscribe to this illiberal and puritanical manner of viewing the productions of chivalry ; yet the passage furnishes a proof of their prevalence, and of the predominant taste of the age, (at least among the higher ranks,) even in Ascham's time. After briefly noticing their origin, it may not be improper in this place, to state the effects which these compositions, in the opinions of men of a more enlightened and liberal cast of sentiment, have produced relatively to social improvement.

Romance was the offspring of chivalry ; as chivalry again was the result of the feudal system. Agreeably to the institutions of that system, each landed proprietor was a soldier ; and was obliged, by the conditions of his tenure, to follow his lord on horseback when he went to war. Hence a soldier was, in those times, a man of the first importance and consideration. The youth, from their earliest

childhood, were initiated in the use of arms; and were taught to look forward for their fame and consideration in society, and for the still more inspiring remuneration of the smiles of the fair, to military achievement and heroic adventure. War, therefore, became the object of their most eager and enthusiastic aspirations; and though they seldom wanted opportunities for the display of their courage, the occasional intervals of peace seem to have given birth to tilts and tournaments, jousts and defiances, which furnished at once the schools of chivalry, and a vent for their ever-active heroism. All differences were decided by an appeal to the sword, whether it consisted of treason, or rape, or murder. The restless spirit of this system, too, stimulated its professors to go in quest of adventures for the mere pleasure of achieving them; and diligently to seek for acts of oppression and wrong, not so much in the first instance, that they may relieve the oppressed, and redress the wrong, as for the delight they felt in martial activity.

The first Romances were merely the record of the adventures and achievements of these military heroes; and consisted simply of songs sung by the minstrels at festivals and convivial

meetings, accompanied by the music of the harp. The particular machinery of giants, fairies, dragons, and enchantments of all sorts, is supposed to have been furnished by the Scalds, or Scandinavian bards; to which were added the other wonderful materials invented in the 12th and 13th centuries.

The first symptom of the existence of Romantic stories, occurs at the battle of Hastings, A.D. 1066. Taillefer, a soldier in the army of William the Conqueror, and who first broke the ranks of the English, is recorded to have sung on that occasion the song of Roland, one of the heroes of Charlemagne. From the circumstance of this song being sung with a view to awaken martial enthusiasm, it is natural to infer, that not only this, but others of a like description must have become popular in Normandy for some time prior to the Norman invasion. From the various songs existing on the subject of Roland, Oliver, and the other heroes of the imaginary war of Charlemagne, against the Saracens in Spain, was compiled, about the year 1100, a large prose narrative in Latin, and supposed to have been the production of Turpin, archbishop of Rheims. It was given to the world as a real history of

the exploits of that monarch, and of the twelve peers of France, his cotemporaries. This work, together with that of Geoffrey of Monmouth, before mentioned, are considered as the main sources of Romantic fiction.

Chivalry originated in the eleventh century. The first regular Romance of which we have any account, appeared in the succeeding one. It was entitled *Le Brut d'Angleterre*, and was written by Robert Wace, a native of Jersey, who was about thirty years younger than Geoffrey of Monmouth, from whose fabulous history he obviously derived his materials.

But Arthur and Charlemagne are not the only themes of these fictitious narratives. The writers of Romance in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, had likewise recourse to the Trojan war; the history of Alexander the Great; and the Crusades; all of which subjects were treated in the vulgar, or Romance tongue. And it is a peculiar feature of these compositions, that whatsoever the subject, or the period whence the characters are drawn, they are uniformly invested with the costume of the age of chivalry.

The first Romances were all written in verse; and like the separate songs from which they were

originally compiled, were accustomed to be sung by the minstrels, and subsequently to be also recited by the *discurs*, at public entertainments. But as manners and customs altered by the lapse of ages, the profession of minstrelsy decayed; the metrical Romances became less in request at public festivities, and were imperceptibly superseded by Romances in prose. There are consequently, (as Mr. Ellis observes,) two different æras, as well as characters, to be distinguished in Romances; that of their composition in verse, during the reigns of the successors of William the Conqueror: the second, the time when these Romances were reduced to prose, and accommodated to the opinions existing at the time of their refabrication. The first prose Romances in our language were, the History of Troy; the Life of Charlemagne; the Histories of Jason, Paris, and Vyenne; the Death of King Arthur; and other prose compositions of Chivalry. All these were translated and printed by Caxton, from the French.

In considering the influence of Romance upon the progress of general improvement, it should be recollected, that prior to its existence, the Latin language was the only vehicle

of literary compositions throughout Europe. Romances had the effect of establishing, in some sort, a common language; and of exciting other nations besides the French, to improve by translation their native tongues. But their most important effect was, that the literary compositions of the day, no longer confined to the few who were professionally learned, became intelligible to the ladies and to the people; and a love of reading, and a taste for poetry in particular, was generally diffused. The compositions of the Romantic versifiers became the most favourite amusement with princes and feudal lords, whose courts, by degrees, displayed a more refined taste in pleasure and magnificence; and these arts of entertainment, thus rendered universally fashionable, gradually laid the foundation for polite literature.

Again—the Romances contain various pleasing images of ancient customs, manners, and institutions, often delineated in a very striking and peculiar manner. They are, besides, the genuine repositories of those tales of chivalry which awakened the imagination, and formed the taste of our early poetical writers. Considered in these points of view, they lose their frivo-

lous and unimportant character ; and, must be allowed to be necessary objects of research to him who would trace the history of man in the progress of human society.

It must be admitted, however, that the most formidable objection against these compositions is, the frequent examples they contain of indecorous conduct. Yet these improprieties are referable not to the *principles* of chivalry, but to the *practice* of the knights. We have seen from a preceding article*, and learn from other sources, that some of those principles are among the purest and most exalted by which human nature can be guided. The knight, on receiving the order of knighthood, takes an oath to devote himself to the defence of religion, of his prince, and of his country ; to protect the feeble, particularly women, widows, and orphans ; to go in quest of thieves, robbers, and other miscreants, that they may be brought to condign punishment ; and above all, he was required to maintain his oath inviolable. The true knight was expected to possess strength, swiftness, with the other accomplishments of bodily activity. His soul, lofty and enterprising, was adorned with all that can in-

* The Order of Knighthood.

spire admiration, or kindle affection. His valour was dauntless in the field, though the generosity of his courage ever forbad him to exult over his vanquished foe. He was wise, just, humane, charitable, beneficent. As a check to the arrogance and pride of the warrior, his principles strictly enjoined him modesty and humility; and this constellation of noble qualities, received additional lustre from manners the most gentle and courteous, dignified with a character of spotless honour, and unshaken truth. The whole was crowned with an enthusiastic devotion to the fair, whom he was not only prompted by inclination, but required by the rules of his order, to love, protect, and adore. Among these, he was obliged to select one to whom he might devote himself with a peculiar constancy of attachment. Her he constituted the judge of his actions, the empress of his soul; and from her hands he received the prize in tournaments—the reward of his dexterity and valour.

The women, on the other hand, adored chivalry, and were ambitious of recommending themselves to the knights, by all the graces of virtue and feminine accomplishments. Their attentions to them were the most generous

and flattering. It was their office to unarm the knights, to cure their wounds, and to perform for them all the offices of hospitality : for the liberal spirit of chivalry sanctified even menial services—deeming no action degrading which was performed for a worthy object. By this reciprocation of kind offices—of mutual respect and affection, operating on occasions of interest frequently occurring, the heart was touched with the magic of feeling ; and imagination, the purifier of the affections, the refiner of the soul, at length awoke from the long and dreary night of ignorance. By contemplating the fancied images of perfection in the characters of a valorous knight, and of an all accomplished woman, the passions were gradually sublimed from the grossness of mere sensual appetite ; and though they were still too frequently indulged at the expence of virtue, gratification now began to be ennobled by the grace of sentiment. The objects which men delight to contemplate, they will soon learn to paint or describe ; and this admiration of excellence first called forth those enthusiastic and heroic songs, which distinguished and adorned the age of chivalry. Inspired by this flattering applause, the hero of Ro-

mance was encouraged to still higher achievements, to more daring enterprize; and his mistress participating in his wild enthusiasm, was more and more intent to heighten those personal and mental charms, which she conceived most likely to gain and to fix his love. The state of manners now underwent a total change, and the intercourse between the sexes was marked by a degree of refinement and delicacy hitherto unknown.

Such were some of the principal effects which chivalry produced upon the ages in which it flourished; and regarded simply as a cause operating on the general progress of society, by first rousing the nations from barbarism, its influence was undoubtedly great. But this influence ceased not with the practice of chivalry. It is still discoverable in the principle of modern honour, and in other peculiar manners and prejudices, which distinguish the modern from the ancient world.

There is yet a point of view in which Romance may be regarded, I think, to advantage, even in the present age. The most interesting qualities in a chivalrous knight, are his high toned enthusiasm and disinterested spirit of adventure—qualities to which, when properly mo-

dified and directed, society owes its highest improvements. Such are the feelings of benevolent genius yearning to diffuse love and peace and happiness among the human race. The gorgeous visions of the imagination, familiar to the enthusiastic soul, purify the heart from selfish pollutions, and animate to great and beneficent action. Indeed, nothing great or eminently beneficial ever has been, or can be effected without enthusiasm—without feelings more exalted than the consideration of simple matter of fact can produce. That Romances have a tendency to excite the enthusiastic spirit, we have the evidence of fact in numerous instances. Hereafter, we shall hear the great Milton indirectly bearing his testimony of admiration and gratitude for their inspiring influence. It is of little consequence, comparatively speaking, whether all the impressions made, be founded in strict philosophical truth. If the imagination be awakened and the heart warmed, we need give ourselves little concern about the final result. The first object is to elicit power. Without power nothing can be accomplished. Should the heroic spirit chance to be excited by reading Romances, we have, alas! too much occasion for that spirit even

in modern times, to wish to repress its generation. Since the Gallic hero has cast his malign aspect over the nations, it is become almost as necessary to social security, as during the barbarism of the feudal times. There is now little danger of its being directed to an *unintelligible* purpose.

Romances then, not only merit attention, as enabling us to enter into the feelings and sentiments of our ancestors,—a circumstance in itself curious, and even necessary to a complete knowledge of the history of past ages; they may still be successfully employed to awaken the mind—to inspire genius: and when this effect is produced, the power thus created may be easily made to bear on any point desired*.



* Those who have the taste to be interested in Romantic Literature, are under considerable obligations to Mr. Southey, for his translation of *Amadis de Gaul*, the most celebrated of all the old Romances.—This is perhaps one of the most beautiful books that ever was written; and the translation is certainly as faithful a one as ever appeared. The Romances are all translated either from French or Italian translation; the costume corrupted; the morals rendered still worse, and the true cha-

It is now time to close the account of books printed by Caxton. The few from which I have given extracts, together with the accompanying remarks, will serve to assist the uninformed reader to some idea of the literature of this period. Caxton began to print, as we have seen, in 1471; but it is remarkable, that from that year to 1540, during which period the English press was in a very flourishing state, under many ingenious, learned, and industrious artists, only the few following classics, (if they merit that title,) were printed in England, viz. Boethius *de Consolatione*, both Latin and English, for Caxton, without date.

character of language utterly lost. In the *Amadis de Gaul* of Southey, these faults are corrected; in particular, that half of Roger Ascham's objection to such compositions which respects their *indelicacy*, is completely obviated, either by the total rejection of the objectionable passages, or by veiling their grossness; and the chastest ears may now listen without a blush to the tales of chivalrous heroes, and their intercourses with their adored fair ones.—The *Palmerin of England*, just published, is another of the admired productions of chivalry. It is about 150 years later than *Amadis*; it is inferior also in merit; yet it possesses much interest, and is likewise edited with great care.—We have heard also, that the subject of Romance is about to receive full illustration from the antiquarian and classical pen of Mr. Walter Scott; and we may be permitted to hope, that the public curiosity will not be disappointed.

—Æsop's Fables, Latin, in yerse, for Wynkin de Worde, 1503, 4to. and once or twice afterwards.—Terence, with the Comment of Badius Ascensius, for the same, 1504, 4to.—Virgil's Bucolics, for the same, 1512, 4to.; and again in 1533.—Tully's Offices, Latin and English, translated by Whittington, 1533, 4to.—One book only, Tully's Epistles, was produced during this period, by the University of Oxford; and that was at the expence of Cardinal Wolsey, without date, or printer's name. By Cambridge, not a single classic.

No Greek book had as yet appeared from an English press. In Linacer's translation of *Galen de Temperamentis*, printed at Cambridge in 1521, 4to. are found a few Greek words and abbreviations, which are said to be the first Greek characters ever used in England. The book was printed by John Siberch, a friend of Erasmus, and a German, who stiles himself *primus utriusque linguæ in Anglia impressor*. But he printed no entire Greek book. The introduction of Hebrew, Chaldee, Arabic types, &c was still later, and attended with more difficulty.

It is observable, that most of the books printed by Caxton, were translated from the

French. From what has been already said, the reasons must be obvious. The knowledge of the learned languages was not sufficiently extended to make it the interest of the first printers to publish the classics. Besides, the attention of the whole reading world was pre-occupied by the more splendid and marvellous tales of chivalry; not to mention the superstition which pervaded all ranks, and which rendered such books as ordinals, confessionals, and particularly such as tended to encourage the liberal contributions of the faithful, more grateful to holy church, than the prophane lore of heathen authors.

Yet, even the illiteracy of the times was a circumstance favourable to English literature: for the multiplication of English books necessarily multiplied English readers; and these again produced more vernacular writers.

The reason why none of the existing translations of the Old and New Testament were printed, is explained by a passage of sir Thomas More; who says, "That on account of the penalties ordered by archbishop Arundel's constitution, though the old translations that were before Wicliffe's days, remained lawful, and were in some folks hands, had and read,

yet (he thought) no printer would lightly be so hot to put any bible in print, at his own charge, and then hang upon a doubtful trial, whether the first copy of his translation was made before Wicliffe's days, or since: for (says he,) if it be made since, 'it must be approved before the printing.' This approbation, however; sir Thomas himself intimates, was not to be obtained.

FABIAN.

ROBERT FABIAN, or FABYAN, was born in London, though in what particular year is not mentioned. Being brought up to trade, he became an opulent merchant, was ultimately chosen one of the aldermen of the city, and in the 9th of Henry VII. had the honour of being elected one of the sheriffs. He died in 1512.

For the period in which he flourished, he was a man of some learning. In his knowledge of the Latin, he was excelled by no layman of his time. He likewise wrote poetry in English, Latin, and French; but his favourite pursuit was the study of history; and he compiled a Chronicle, by which his name has descended to posterity. Of this Chronicle, stiled, "The

Concordance of Stories," the following account is given in the *Biographia Britannica*:

“ It was first printed in London, in 1516, fol. by R. Pynson, and afterwards by William Rastell, 1533, fol. in neat and small black types, and on good paper. At the conclusion of each part, there is a hymn to the Virgin Mary, (omitted in the following editions.) And at the end of all, ‘ Thus endeth Fabian’s Chronicle. Printed by William Rastell, and fynished the laste daye of December, in the yere of our Lorde, M. V. C. and xxxiii.’ There are also at the end five leaves, which bring down the history to the beginning of king Henry VIII. but are omitted in subsequent editions, particularly in one of the year 1559, now before us. The whole work is divided into two volumes: whereof the first begins at Brute, and ends at the death of our Henry II. and Philip II. king of France. The second volume, which is the most valuable of the two, contains the Chronicles of England and of France, from the beginning of the reign of king Richard I. until the end of the reign of Charles IX. of France; that is, till the year 1504, the 20th of king Henry VII. And it appears by the conclusion,

that it was finished by the author, November 7th, 1504. The second volume begins with an account of the wards of London, and the parish churches in each ward; and then are set down the bailiffs of that city under every year, from the time they were appointed, that is, from 1190, until the year 1209, when the two bailiffs were converted by king John, into a mayor and two shireves. Of these the author gives exact lists, under each year, as far as his Chronicle reaches. He comprehends, as it is said in the title-page, the Chronicles of England and of France; not altogether, or under the respective years, but in distinct chapters or articles, denoted in the beginning by the words *Anglia* and *Francia*.—We are told that Cardinal Wolsey, caused as many copies of this book as he could come at, to be burnt, because the author had made too clear a discovery of the clergy. As for the character it bears, 'tis called by one who was a good judge, 'a painful labour, to the great honour of the city, and of the whole realm.' He is very particular in the affairs of London, many good things being noted by him (which concern the government thereof,) hardly to be had elsewhere. In the beginning of his seventh part,

he observes Ralph Higden's method of making his years commence at Michaelmas ; and is in other respects a great follower of that author."

The story of king Lear, and his three daughters, as related in the first book of Geoffrey of Monmouth, and which has been immortalized by Shakespeare, we find detailed also in Fabian ; chapters 14, 15, and 16.

Lear, the son of Baldud, was made ruler over the Britons, the year of the world 4338. This Lear was noble of conditions, and guided his land and subjects in great wealth. He made the town of Caerleyr, now called Leyceter, or Leicester. And albeit that this man held long the principality of Britain, yet of him is nothing left worthy memory, except that Gaufrid saith, that he received of his wife three daughters only, without any son, which were named Conorilla, Ragan, and Cordelia ; the which he much loved, but most specially he loved the youngest, Cordelia by name.

When this Lear, or Leyth, after some writers, was fallen in competent age to know the mind of his three daughters, he first asked Conorilla, the eldest, how well she loved him ; the which, calling her Gods to record, said she loved him more than her own soul. With this answer her father being well contented, demanded of Ragan, the second daughter,

how well she loved him. To whom she answered, and affirming with great oaths, said that she could not with her tongue express the great love that she bare to him; affirming furthermore, that she loved him above all creatures. After these pleasant answers, had of those two daughters, he called before him Cordelia, the youngest, the which understanding the dissimulation of her two sisters, intending to prove her father, said, Most reverend father, where my two sisters have dissembled with thee, with their pleasant words fruitless, I, knowing the great love and fatherly zeal that toward me ever before this time thou hast borne, (for the which I may not speak to thee otherwise than my conscience leadeth me,) therefore I say to thee, father, I have loved thee even as my father, and shall continually while I live, love thee as my natural father. And if thou wilt further be inquisitive of the love that I to thee bear; I ascertain thee, that as much as thou art worthy to be beloved, even so much I love thee and no more.

The father with this answer being discontent, married his two elder daughters, that one unto the duke of Cornwall, and that other unto the duke of Albania, or Scotland, and divided with them two in marriage, his land of Britain, after his death; and the one half in hand, during his natural life. And for the third, Cordelia, reserved nothing.

It so fortunèd after, that Aganippus, which the Chronicle of England named Agamp, and king of France, heard of the beauty and womanhood of Cordelia, and sent unto her father, and axed her in marriage. To whom it was answered, that the king would gladly give to him his daughter; but for dower he would not depart with: for he had all promised unto his other two daughters.

Aganippus, thus by his *messagyers*¹ informed, remembered the virtues of the forenamed Cordelia, and without promise of dower, married the said Cordelia.

But here is to be noted, that where this Aganippus, or Agamp, is called, in divers Chronicles, king of France, it cannot agree with other histories, nor with the Chronicle of France: for it is testified by *Polychronica*, by Peter Pictaviẽce, by master Robert Gagwyne, by bishop Antonyne, and many other Chronicles, that long after this day there was no king in France; nor long after it was called France; but at this day the inhabitants thereof were called *Galli*, and were tributaries unto Rome, without king, till the time of Valentinianus, emperor of Rome, as hereafter in this work shall be manifestly shewed.

The story of Britons saith, that in the time that Lear reigned in Britain, the land of France was under the dominion of twelve kings, of the which Agá-

¹ messengers.

nippus should be one. The which saying is full of unlike to be true, which might be proved by many reasons, which I pass over for length of time.

Then it followeth in the story—after this Lear was fallen in age, these foresaid two dukes thinking long *or* the lordship of Britain was fallen to their hands, arose *again*¹ their father, (as testifieth Gaufrede,) and bereft him the governance of the land upon certain conditions, to be continued for term of life. The which, in process of time, more and more were *minished*², as well by Maglaunus, as by Henninus, husbands of the forenamed Conoriila and Ragan. But most displeased Lear, the unkindness of his two daughters, considering their words to him before spoken, and sworn, and now found and proved them all contrary.

For the which he being of necessity constrained, fled his land, and sailed into Gallia, for to be comforted of his daughter Cordelia; whereof she having knowledge, of natural kindness, comforted him. And after shewing all the manner to her husband, by his agreement, received him and his to her lord's court, where he was cherished after her best manner.

Long it were to shew unto you the circumstance of the utterance of the unkindness of his two daughters, and of the words of comfort given to him by Aganippus and Cordelia, or of the council and pur-

¹ against.

² diminished.

veyance made by the said Aganippus and his lords, for restoring of Lear again to his dominion. But finally, he was, by the help of the said Aganippus, restored again to his lordship; and so possessed, lived as ruler and governor thereof by the space of three years after; in which season died Aganippus. And when this Lear had ruled this land by the term of forty years, as affirmeth divers Chronicles, he died and was buried at his town of Caerleir, or Leister; leaving after him for to inherit the land, his daughter Cordelia.

Cordelia, the youngest daughter of Lear, was, by assent of the Britons, made lady of Britain, in the year of the world, four thousand three hundred and ninety-eight, the which guided the land full wisely, by the time or space of five years complete; the which time expired and run, her two nephews, called Margan and Cunedagi, sons of her two sisters, came upon her land, and made therein great waste and destruction; and at the last took her and cast her into a strong prison, where she, being despaired of the recovery of her estate, (as testifieth Gaufryste,) slew herself, when she had reigned, as before is declared, by the term of five years.



I shall present the reader with one extract

more taken from the 83d chapter. It is the relation of the celebrated interview between Vortigern and Rowena, (stiled by our author Ronowen,) together with the arrival of St. Germain, and bishop Lupus, to extirpate the Pelagian (or according to Fabian, the Arian) heresy. Both these stories are related in the third book of Geoffrey of Monmouth.

Then by the *soude* of Hengist, came with sixteen sails, Ronowen, the daughter of the said Hengist, which was a maiden of excellent beauty. After whose coming, Hengist, upon a day, besought the king that he would see his castle, which he had newly edified. To whose request the king was agreeable; and at the day assigned, came to the said castle, where he was joyously received. And there, among other pastimes, the said Ronowen, with a cup of gold, full of wine, presented the king, saluting and saying, *wassayle*. The king, which before that time had heard no like salutation, nor yet understood what she meant, axed of her father what she meant by that word *wassayle*. To whom it was answered by Hengist, that it was a salutation of good and gladness, and that the king should drink after her, joining thereunto this answer—drink, hail! Wherefore the king, as he was informed, took the cup of the maiden's hand, and drank; and after beheld the wench

in such manner, that he was wounded with the dart of the blind god Cupid, that never after he could withdraw his love from the wench; but lastly, by instigation of the devil, axed her in marriage of her father. And by force thereof, as witnesseth *Poly-cronica*, he put from him his lawful wife, of the which he had before time received three noble sons, called Vortimerus, Catagrinus, and Pascentius. Then the king gave unto Hengistus, the lordship of Kent, tho' Garangonus, then earl thereof, thereat grudged, with many of his Britons.

For this and for that, that the king had married a woman of uncouth *beleve*, well near all the Britons forsook him and his works. Nevertheless, some there were, as well nobles and other, that comforted the king in his evil doing. By which mean and other *unleful* deeds, then daily used, the faith of Christ began sore to appal. And over that, an heresy, called Arian's heresy, began then to spring in Britain. For the which, two holy bishops, named Germanus and Lupus, as of Gaufryste is witnessed, came into Britain to reform the king, and all other that erred from the way of truth.

Of this holy man, St. Germain, Vincent Historial saith, that upon an evening when the weather was passing cold, and the snow fell very fast, he axed lodging of the king of Britain, for him and his compeers, which was denied. Then he, after sitting

under a bush in the field, the king's herdman passed by, and seeing this bishop with his company sitting in the weather, desired him to his house to take there such poor lodging as he had. Whereof the bishop being glad and fain, *yode*¹ unto the house of the said herdman, the which received him with glad cheer. And for him and his company, willed his wife to kill his only calf, and to dress it for his guest's supper; the which was also done. When the holy man had supped, he called to him his hostess, willing and desiring her, that she should diligently gather together all the bones of the dead calf; and them so gathered, to wrap together within the skin of the said calf. And then it lay in the stall before the rack near unto the dame. Which done according to the commandment of the holy man, shortly after the calf was restored to life; and forthwith ate hay with the dam at the rack. At which marvel all the house was greatly astonished, and yielded thanking unto Almighty God, and to that holy bishop.

Upon the morrow, this holy bishop took with him the herdman, and *yode* unto the presence of the king, and axed of him in sharp wise, why that over-night he had denied to him lodging. Where-with the king was so abashed, that he had no power to give unto the holy man answer. Then, St Ger-

¹ went.

main said to him: I charge thee, in the name of the Lord God, that thou and thine depart from this palace, and resign it and the rule of thy land to him that is more worthy this room than thou art. The which all thing by power divine was observed and done; and the said herdman, by the holy bishop's authority, was set into the same dignity; of whom after descended all the kings of Britain.

Of the character of Fabian, as an historian, Warton, in his History of English Poetry, gives the following account:—"Our author is the dullest of compilers. He is equally attentive to the mayors of London, and to the monarchs of England; and seems to have thought the dinners at Guildhall, and the pageantries of the city companies, more interesting transactions than our victories in France and our struggles for public liberty at home. One of Fabian's historical anecdotes, under the important reign of Henry V. is, that a new weather-cock was placed on the top of St. Paul's steeple. The earlier chapters of these childish annals faithfully record all those fabulous traditions which generally supply the place of historic monuments, in describing the origin of a great nation."

REVIVAL OF LETTERS.

WE are now arrived on the confines of light. The revival of classical learning about the middle of this century, (the 15th,) created a new æra in literature and in human affairs, auspicious to every species of improvement. From the influence of this event upon the subsequent progress of knowledge, and particularly of the English language, it may be proper, before entering on the reign of Henry VIII. to give a cursory view of the subject, as far at least as it relates to the introduction of the Grecian and Roman learning into England.

The connection between the ancient and modern learning, was never entirely dissolved. Amidst the violence and general insecurity which prevailed in the middle ages, the Romish clergy, invested by superstition with a mysterious and sanctified authority, which kept the vulgar in

we, enjoyed that security and leisure, which are essential to intellectual pursuits. The monastic libraries contained all the literature of the times ; and a few out of the numbers who were intellectually idle, were prompted either from inherent activity of character, or simply as a remedy for listlessness, to read, and afterwards to write. We are thus indebted to the monkish writers for those few rays of light which gleam through the darkness of that savage period. Though the taste and stile of the monkish historians are as barbarous as the age in which they lived ; yet, from their frequent allusions to ancient history, and their quotations of ancient authors, it is evident that the more dignified and intelligent churchmen were familiar with the Roman learning. But this learning was confined to the cloister. The profane world was sunk in ignorance and barbarism:

About the middle of the fourteenth century, Dante, Petrarca, with his pupil and friend, Boccace, in Italy ; and soon after, Chaucer and Gower, in England, by the cultivation of their vernacular languages, commenced a new æra in literary taste, and contributed to enlarge the sphere of intellectual pleasures. Pe-

trarca was organized for the higher and more refined emotions ; and his genius, inspired by the most pure and exalted passion, expressed his glowing feelings in language of correspondent truth and delicacy. The strings of the human heart, vibrating in harmony, acknowledged the touch of nature ; and the poetry of Petrarca creating a finer intellectual *tact*, produced in a few minds, a distaste for romantic imagery and the peculiarities of Gothic manners. This incipient diffusion of a juster sentiment, prepared the way for the complete establishment of classical refinement in the succeeding century.

From the time when the Greek language first became an object of curiosity in England, to the period of Cheke and Smith, those of our countrymen whom literary ardour stimulated to the acquisition of Grecian learning, were compelled to resort to Italy, and even to Greece. It appears that there were some symptoms of the revival of the Roman and Grecian classics in England about the time, and even before the capture of Constantinople (1453) impelled the learned Greeks to a refuge in Italy. Among these early classical scholars, I shall mention only a few who were the most distinguished, or the

effects of whose efforts have been most permanent.

William Groeyn, fellow of New College, Oxford, perfected his knowledge of the Greek tongue at Florence, under Demetrius, Chalcondylas, and Politian; and at Rome under Hermolaus Barbarus. On his return to England, and before the year 1490, he voluntarily became the first lecturer in that language at Oxford. It is affirmed, however, by Polydore Virgil, probably from a partiality to his own country, that Cornelius Vitellus, an Italian, of noble birth and great learning, was the first who taught the Greek and Roman classics in that university.

John Tiptoft, the unfortunate earl of Worcester, was inferior to none of the ecclesiastics of his time in his diligent pursuit of ancient learning. He studied at Padua; and by the purity and elegance of his Latin, recommended himself to the notice of pope Pius the Second, and other *literati* of the Italian school. His Latin letters still remain to evince the justness of this encomium. Moreover, he translated Cicero's Dialogue on Friendship, into English; which was printed by Caxton, in 1481, fol. He likewise translated into Eng-

lish two elegant Latin orations of Banatusius Magnomontanus, supposed to be spoken by C. Scipio, and C. Flaminius, rivals in the courtship of Lucretia. These were also printed by Caxton, with Tully's two Dialogues above mentioned. Tiptoft was the general patron of all those of his countrymen, who were actuated with the curiosity to penetrate the mines of antiquity, and to enter on the new plan of study. The Humphredian library at Oxford was instituted about this time; and he had prepared a present for it of select MS. books, valued at five hundred marks; though there is some doubt whether, at the earl's execution in 1470, they had ever been received by the university. Wood observes, that he had meditated a similar benefaction to Cambridge.

Italy was at this time the general mart for ancient authors, especially the Greek classics; and it is scarcely questionable that the above MSS. were purchased there. The Turkish emperors, now seated at Constantinople, were ignorant of the value of these treasures; and they became interesting objects of commerce to Italian emissaries dispatched to purchase books, which they afterwards sold in their own coun-

try. It was chiefly through this channel that the famous Florentine library was formed by Cosmo and Laurence of Medici, and by the dukes of Florence, their munificent successors.

Lilly, the famous grammarian, resided, about the year 1500, during five years, in the island of Rhodes. Hence, we are informed by Rhenanus, that he was not only acquainted with the whole circle of Grecian authors, but with the domestic life and familiar conversation of the Greeks. He was the first teacher of Greek at any public school in England. He was appointed head master of St. Paul's school, in 1510, by dean Collet, the founder. After his residence at Rhodes, he added an additional polish to his Latin stile at Rome, under Johannes Sulpicius, and Pomponius Sabinus; and thus became one of the most accomplished scholars of his age. He died of the plague in 1522.

This practice of visiting Italy and Greece for instruction, was encouraged by some of the bishops, though they had received their education in the English universities. Pacc, one of our learned countrymen, and friend of Erasmus, was removed, while yet a boy, by

Langton, bishop of Winchester, from the school within the precincts * of his own palace to the university of Padua. The same bishop bequeathed by will to this his scholar, an exhibition of ten pounds a year, for seven years, to support him while studying at Bononia. His instructors at Padua were Cuthbert Tunstall, afterwards bishop of Durham, and Hugh Latimer.

Again, before the year 1520, Richard Croke, one of the first restorers of the Greek language in England, was educated at the expence of archbishop Wareham, at the universities of Paris, Louvain, and Leipsie. He afterwards succeeded Erasmus in the Greek professorship at Cambridge. Croke published at Cologne, *Introductiones in Rudimenta Græcæ*, 1520, dedicated to his patron archbishop Wareham.

About this time, strong symptoms were manifested, that the mists of ancient prejudice

* It was customary in these early times, for the bishops to educate in their families a number of youths, particularly the sons of the nobles and of gentlemen. In the 13th century, Grosethete, bishop of Lincoln, educated in this manner most of the nobility in the kingdom. These youths were placed there in quality of pages: *Filios nobilium procerum regni, quos secum habuit domicellos*.—Cardinal Wolsey likewise educated in his house many of the young nobility.

were clearing off. From the year 1503 to the reformation, nearly twenty new grammar schools were founded and endowed in England—a greater number than had been established for three centuries before. Among these was cardinal Wolsey's school at Ipswich—an institution which rivalled those of Winchester and Eton. In addition to the scholars, it consisted of a dean, twelve canons, and a numerous choir.

As early as the year 1506, we find a lecturer established at Christ's College, in Cambridge; who, together with logic and philosophy, is ordered to read *vel ex poetarum, vel ex oratorum operibus*. This was in the course of collegiate discipline. A more decisive instance of an attempt to depart from the ancient contracted plan of education, occurs in the appointment of two professors for the Greek and Latin languages, by Fox, bishop of Winchester, on his founding of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in the year 1517. The Latin professor is expressly directed to extirpate barbarism from the new society; and his course of lectures was not restricted to the limits of the college, but open to the students of the university in general. The Greek lecturer

was instructed to explain the best Greek classics ; and the poets, historians, and orators which are particularly mentioned, are among the purest extant.

About the year 1519, was founded also at Oxford, by cardinal Wolsey, a public lecture in rhetoric and humanity. He soon after established the first public chair in England for the Greek language. Both of these lectures were endowed with ample salaries. Four or five years afterwards, a public lecture for the learned languages was opened at Cambridge, by Robert Wakefield, at the instance of Henry VIII. And it should be mentioned to the honour of Robert Barnes, prior of the Augustines, at Cambridge, that he, assisted by his scholar, Thomas Parnell, explained Plautus, Terence, and Cicero, within the precincts of his own monastery. About the same time also, Erasmus expounded at Cambridge the grammar of Chrysoloras. Erasmus was admitted lady Margaret's professor, about 1511, being the fourth from its foundation. Among these early scholars also, bishop Fischer and sir Thomas More hold a distinguished rank ; but I shall have occasion to speak more particularly of them hereafter.

But these bold attempts at improvement did not pass without the most violent opposition. The university of Oxford was rent into factions, under the classical and hostile appellations of Greeks and Trojans. The latter were the champions of the schools, and of the old modes; the former were the advocates of the new plan of study; who, unable to prevail by persuasion and argument, were frequently urged to blows with their bigotted and obstinate antagonists. These absurd and dishonourable contests, which the prowess of the parties themselves was ineffectual to decide, were at length appeased by the good sense, and especially by the wit and ridicule, of sir Thomas More*.

Attention now began to be paid to improve the vernacular language. Erasmus particularly mentions Collet, dean of St. Paul's, who, with a view to adorn the stile of his discourses, employed much time in the perusal of Chaucer, Gower, Lydgate, and other English poets; but students still visited Italy, to give the last polish to their Latin stile. This combination of endeavours to introduce a li-

* See his *Epistola Scholasticis quibusdam Trojanos se appellantis*, published by Hearne, 1716, 8vo.

beral plan of education and study, was finally crowned by the magnificent establishment of Wolsey's College, now Christ Church, at Oxford, to which were invited the most accomplished scholars in Europe, and for the library of which were designed transcripts of all the valuable MSS. of the Vatican.

These auspicious beginnings, however, were soon interrupted from several causes:—1. The projected divorce of Henry VIII. from queen Catharine, had the effect, for a time, of replunging the literary world into all the idle disputations of theologic subtlety and casuistical refinement.—2. The reformation, which, though so fruitful in great and beneficent effects, was hostile to the cultivation of polite learning, and to the formation of a just and elegant taste*.—3. The dissolution of the monasteries operated as a temporary check to the progress of improvement. The monastic institutions, generally speaking, were the nurses of indolence and illiteracy, and the bulwarks of a baleful superstition. Yet they afforded leisure and opportunities for study, which, though commonly neglected, were sometimes

* This topic the reader will find somewhat expanded at the commencement of the second volume.

employed to useful purposes. Many of the abbots were learned men, of liberal views, and hence patrons of learning. They appropriated a portion of their superfluous revenues to the education of youth, (particularly the sons of noblemen,) in their monasteries; which were the schools for all the towns and villages in their vicinity. And though the intellectual light which these schools diffused, was merely a glimmering of knowledge, still it was better than total night. When the monasteries were abolished, learning was left without support; and the youth, deprived of the hope of reward, resorted to mechanical employments; and provincial ignorance became universal.

Still the reign of Henry VIII. was, upon the whole, highly favourable to the progress of letters. Henry united in his own person the rival claims of the houses of York and Lancaster, whose sanguinary contests had so long deluged the kingdom with blood. These disastrous struggles for power being thus at an end, the arts and amusements of peace began to revive, and this reign is justly considered as forming an important æra in literary history.

In the year 1535, the king issued injunc-

tions to the university of Cambridge, for the reformation of study. The dialectics of Rodolphus Agricola, the favorite of Erasmus, and the logic of Aristotle, are prescribed to be taught; and the unedifying problems of Scotus and Burlæus abolished; as likewise the tedious commentaries on Peter Lombard's sentences. Moreover, classical lectures were established, and the books of Melancthon, with other esteemed writers among the reformers recommended. These improvements were especially promoted, as we shall see hereafter, by Cheke and Smith, who probably did more than any other two individuals to secure the establishment of ancient learning among us.

Henry VIII.

FROISSART.

SIR JOHN FROISSART was born at Valenciennes, about 1337, and subsequently became canon and treasurer of Chimay, in the diocese of Liege, in Hainault. But he is chiefly known to posterity by a general history of France and Spain, with other parts of Europe, and particularly of England, from the year 1326, to 1400. Though born a Frenchman, he spent the greater part of his youth in the court of our Edward III. and many years after was familiarly conversant in that of Richard II. He wrote in French, his native language, in his time the court language of England.

His writings were much corrupted by transcription; and even the printed copies which were taken on the introduction of printing, were chargeable with equal and similar faults, which consisted chiefly in names and numbers.

His work was translated into English by sir John Bouchier, lord Berners, 'deputy of Calais, at the command of Henry VIII. and printed by Pinson, in 1523. In this English edition, many of the errors alluded to are corrected.

Froissart died about 1402, having ended his life and his story almost at the same time.

The Author's Prologue.

Chap. 1.

To the intent that the honourable and noble adventures of feats of arms done and atchieved by the wars of France and England, should notably be enregistered and put in perpetual memory, whereby the *prewe* and hardy may have ensample to encourage them in their well doing, I, sir John Froissart, will treat and record a history of great *louage*¹ and praise. But or I begin, I require the Saviour of all the World, who of nothing created all things, that he will give me such grace and understanding, that I may contrive and *psever*² in such wise, that whoso this process readeth or heareth may take *pastounce*³, pleasure, and ensample. It is said of truth, that all

¹ *louange*, praise.

² *persevere*.

³ *pastime*.

buildings are masoned and wrought of divers stones ; and all great rivers are *gurged*¹ and assembled of divers surges and springs of water. In likewise all sciences are *extraught*² and compiled of divers clerks. Of that one writeth, another peradventure is ignorant. But by the famous writing of ancient authors, all things *ben* knowen in one place or other.

Then to attain to the matter that I have enprized. I will begin first, by the grace of God, and of the blessed virgin, our lady, St. Mary, from whom all comfort and consolation proceedeth ; and will take my foundation out of the Chronicles, sometime compiled by the right reverend, discreet, and sage master John la Bele, sometime canon in St. Lanbartis, of Liege, who with good heart and due diligence did his true *devoier* in writing this noble Chronicle, and did continue it all his life days, in following the truth as near as he might, to his great charge and cost, in seeking to have the perfect knowledge thereof.

He was also in his life days well-beloved, and of the secret council with the lord sir John of Hainault, who is often remembered (as reason requireth,) hereafter in this book : for of many fair and noble adventures, he was chief causer ; and by whose means the said sir John la Bele, might well know and hear of

¹ gorged.² extracted.

many divers noble deeds, the which hereafter shall be declared. Truth it is, that I who have enterprized this book to ordain for pleasure and *pastaunce*, to the which always I have been inclined, and for that intent I have followed and frequented the company of divers noble and great lords, as well in France, England, and Scotland, as in divers other countries, and have had knowledge by them. And always to my power justly have enquired for the truth of the deeds of war, and adventures that have fallen; and specially since the great battle of Poitiers, *whereas*¹ the noble king John of France was taken prisoner; as before that time I was but of a young age or understanding. Howbeit, I took on me as soon as I came from school, to write and receive the said book, and bare the same compiled into England, and presented the volume thereof to my lady Philippa, of Hainault, noble queen of England, who right amiably received it, to my great profit and advancement. And it may be so, that the same book is not as yet examined nor corrected, so justly as such a case requireth: for feats of arms dearly bought and atchieved, the honour thereof ought to be given and truly divided to them that by prowess and hard travail have deserved it. Therefore to acquit me in that behalf, and in following the truth as near as I can, I John Froissart, have enterprised this history, on the foresaid

¹ whereat.

ordinance and true foundation, at the instance and request of a dear lord of mine, sir Robert of Namur, knight, lord of Beaufort; to whom entirely I owe love and obeisance. And God grant me to do that thing that may be to his pleasure. Amen.



Of the Manners of the Scots in the 14th century, particularly in War.—Chap. 17.

These Scotsmen are right hardy, and sore travelling in harness and in wars: for when they will enter into England, within a day and a night, they will drive their whole host twenty-four mile: for they are all a horseback, without it be the *truandals*¹ and laggered of the host, who follow after a foot. The knights and squires are well horsed; and the common people and others on little hackneys and geldings; and they carry with them no carts nor *charytes*² for the diversities of the mountains that they must pass thro' in the county of Northumberland. They *toke*³ with them no purveyance of bread nor of wine: for their usage and soberness is such in time of war, that they will pass in the journey a great long time with flesh half sodden, without bread, and drink of the river water, without wine; and they *nother*⁴ care for pots

¹ truants, stragglers.

² chariots.

³ take.

⁴ neither.

nor pans: for they seeth beasts in their own skins. They are ever sure to find plenty of beasts in the county that they will pass thro', therefore they carry with them none other purveyance; but on their horse, between the saddle and the pannel, they *trusse*¹ a broad plate of metal, and behind the saddle, they will have a little sack full of oatmeal, to the intent that when they have eaten of the sodden flesh, then they lay their plate on the fire, and temper a little of the oatmeal; and when the plate is hot, they cast off the thin paste thereon; and so make a little cake, in manner of a crakenell, or biscuit; and that they eat to comfort withal their stomachs. Wherefore it is no great marvel though they make greater journeys than other people do.

I would willingly have given a much longer extract from Froissart, and one more characteristic of his peculiar manner: but the literary world is aware that a new translation of him was given to the public, in 1805, by Mr. Thomas Johnes, in which the names of persons and

¹ thrust.

places, disfigured in the original, are corrected. This ancient historian may now be read with all the facility of a modern author, as the ordinary reader is no longer repelled either by inconvenient bulk of volume, or by antique peculiarities of language. For this edition, which is in four volumes 4to. several MSS. in the translator's own library, as well as in the British Museum, were collated with the printed copies; many improved readings adopted, and even some chapters added, which were not in any of the printed editions. —Another edition was published last year, in 12 vols. 8vo.

Froissart was a well informed historian. That period of English history of which he treats, is much indebted to him. He spared no pains in collecting his materials, and visited the courts of princes, that he might avail himself of the best sources of information, both by the collection of memoirs, and by the conversation of those who had the management of affairs. He resided for a long time at the court of the princess Philippa, daughter of the earl of Hainault, and wife of Edward III. king of England. His narrative is very copious, though lively and interesting. He has been accused

of being too partial to the English, and of bestowing upon them higher encomiums than on the French, because the latter neglected to reward his labours, whereas the former remunerated him with a handsome salary. His account of the affairs of Edward III. and his unfortunate successor Richard II. is the fullest and best extant.

His history has been abridged in Latin, by Sleidan, the German historian and political writer, who complains in his preface, that Froissart is too prolix, relating every particular at full length; and that he is particularly faulty in this respect in his descriptions of military preparations, skirmishes, single combats, storming of places, and the speeches and conversations of princes. But it is this very prolixity—this minuteness of description, which chiefly renders Froissart interesting to a modern reader. His principal historic facts, simply considered, may be read perhaps with equal advantage, and with a much less expence of time, in the compressed form of modern compilations; but here they are divested entirely of the *costume* of the age. Froissart lived in the age of chivalry; had imbibed its sentiments, was familiar with its manners; and

must have been often an eye-witness of tilts and tournaments—the sportive images of those real and terrible battles which he paints with such romantic colouring. It is this quality which made Caxton class him with the writers of romance in the passage above quoted*. In Froissart, then, we not only see the historic facts in all their copiousness of detail, but blended with those peculiar sentiments and feelings which characterised the times in which he lived. Such works must be curious and valuable, till the knowledge of past ages shall cease to be an object of curiosity.

Notwithstanding the declaration of Sleidan, that he has omitted nothing of moment, his abridgment is by no means executed with fairness and impartiality; and he has been accordingly censured by Humphry Lloid, in the following terms: *Dum Gallico nomini nimium faveret, Anglorum nobilissima gesta aut silentio preterit, aut ab autore dissentiens, aliter quàm a Froissardo scriptum est, literis commendavit.*

Froissart was also a poet, as well as an historian. He is even said by Pasquier, in his *Recherches de la France*, to have been the

* See page 245.

founder of a new species of poetry—such as the chant-royal, the ballad, the pastoral, and the rondeau*.

* See Godwin's *Life of Chaucer*, 4to. Vol. II. p. 351.

FISCHER,

Bishop of Rochester.

THE fate of this celebrated prelate was intimately connected with that of sir Thomas More, the subject of the succeeding article. Both were alike the victims of the tyrannic vengeance of Henry VIII. and martyrs to popery. Bishop Fischer was born in 1459, and was the son of a merchant of Beverly, in Yorkshire. He received the rudiments of his education under the tuition of a priest of the collegiate church in that town; and entered at Cambridge, in 1484, where he took his degrees in arts in 1488, and 1491. He was appointed in 1495, one of the proctors of the university, and elected master of Michael-House, (now Trinity-College) his own college. In 1501, he took the degree of doctor, and the

same year was elected chancellor of the university; which, however, he resigned in 1514, recommending as his successor, Wolsey, bishop of Lincoln, who was accordingly chosen. But he thinking proper to decline the honour, the university, indignant at his rejection, and bound in gratitude to Fischer, immediately chose the latter perpetual chancellor, or during life; which is the first instance of such a choice.

Prince Arthur, eldest son of Henry VII. was at this time living; and prince Henry, (afterwards Henry VIII.) being designed for an ecclesiastic, was placed under the tuition of Fischer, who hence became acquainted with Margaret, the famous countess of Richmond, and mother of Henry VII. His merit soon obtained him the office of chaplain and confessor to her ladyship, whose confidence in him was unbounded. In 1504, he was promoted to the see of Rochester; and though it was the least valuable of the bishoprics at that time, he refused, with a disinterested magnanimity, ever to exchange it for a better.

On the 29th of June, 1509, death deprived both him and the public of their noble benefactress, whose virtues and accomplishments

he celebrated in a funeral sermon. Three years after, he was nominated to attend the Lateran council at Rome, as appears by the archives of St. John's College, though from some cause or other, he was prevented from undertaking the journey.

It was in the year 1527 that Henry VIII. first proposed to him the dangerous question respecting the validity of his marriage with queen Catharine; when the upright bishop, in obedience to the dictates of his conscience, declared it to be legal in the sight of God and man, and that from this opinion he would never depart. Accordingly, when the oath required by the act of supremacy was tendered to him, he refused to take it, was sent prisoner to the Tower, and his bishopric declared void from the second of January, 1535.

In May of the same year, and while he was in the Tower, the pope, Paul III. in consideration of his virtues, and of his faithful attachment to the religion of Rome, created him cardinal, by the title of cardinal priest of St. Vitalis. The king, enraged at his receiving the cardinal's hat, prohibited its being brought to England; exclaiming with facetious cru-

elty—"Well, let the pope send him a hat when he will; mother of God! he shall wear it on his shoulders then: for I will leave him never a head to set it on." He was beheaded on the 22d of June, 1535, and the next day his head was fixed upon London Bridge.

In his person, bishop Fischer was tall, comely, and robust. For the superiority of his talents as a scholar, as likewise for the excellence of his moral character, when uninfluenced by superstitious bigotry, we have the testimony of Erasmus; who says of him—"That he was a man of the highest integrity, profound learning, incredible sweetness of temper, and uncommon greatness of soul." The words of Erasmus are remarkable, and deserve to be quoted.—"*Reverendus Episcopus Roffensis, vir non solum mirabili integritate vitæ, verum etiam altâ et reconditâ doctrinâ, tum morum quoque incredibili comitate commendatus maximis pariter ac minimis. Aut egregie fallor, aut is vir est unus, cum quo nemo sit hac tempestate conferendus, vel integritate vitæ, vel eruditione, vel animi magnitudine.*"

It is remarkable, that even in his old age, his literary ardour urged him to learn Greek of Erasmus.

But notwithstanding his virtues, and the general benevolence of his character, the persecuting and odious principles of his religion, rendered him inhumanly severe against the reformers. In conjunction with his friend sir Thomas More, he seized all the books of Lutheranism, as well as of the Lollards, punishing with severity those in his diocese who followed the errors, as he called them, of those arch-heretics, Wicliffe and Luther.

He was the author of various works, the greater number of which are in Latin.—1. *Assertionum Martini Lutheri Confutatio*.—2. *Defensio assertionis Henrici octavi de septem sacramentis, &c.*—Henry VIII.'s book against Luther was ascribed, at the time, to the united labours of Fischer and More, in conjunction with Lea, afterwards archbishop of York ; and sometimes to each of the two first separately. Collyer, in his Ecclesiastical History, on the authority of lord Herbert, is not of this opinion; but thinks that at the request of the king, they might have looked it over, and probably have suggested some alterations; and that the bulk of the work was composed by his majesty.—3. *Episto-*

la Responsoria Epistolæ Lutheri.—4. *Sacerdotii defensio contra Lutherum.*—5. *Pro Damnatione Lutheri.*—6. *De Veritate Corporis, et Sanguinis Christi in Eucharistiâ, aduersus Oecolampadium.*—7. *De Unicâ Magdalenâ.*—8. *Petrum fuisse Romæ.*

His English works consist—1. of Sermons, of which one was preached at the funeral of Henry VII. ; and one at the funeral of Margaret, countess of Richmond. The latter was republished in 1708, by Thomas Baker, B. D. Another of his sermons was preached at London, on the day that Luther's writings were publicly burnt.—2. He has also left several smaller tracts on subjects of piety.—Most of these pieces were collected and printed in 1595, at Wurzburg, in one volume folio.

I shall select as a specimen, the character of the countess of Richmond, from his sermon at her funeral. The text is—*Dixit Martha ad Jesum* ; from which he takes occasion to run a parallel between Martha and that celebrated woman. The sermon presents a pleasing view of the excellence of heart by which she was animated, as likewise a curious picture of the superstition of the times.

First I say, the comparison of them two may be made in four things : in nobleness of person ; in discipline of their bodies ; in ordering of their souls to God ; in hospitalities keeping and charitable dealing to their neighbours. In which four, the noble woman Martha (as say the doctors, entreating this gospel and her life,) was singularly to be commended and praised ; wherefore let us consider likewise, whether in this noble countess may any thing like be found.

First, the blessed Martha was a woman of noble blood, to whom by inheritance belonged the castle of Bethany ; and this nobleness of blood they have which descended of noble lineage. Beside this, there is a nobleness of manners, withouten which the nobleness of blood is much defaced : for as Boecius saith, It ought be good in the nobleness of blood, it is for that thereby the noble men and women should be ashamed to go out of kind, from the virtuous manners of their ancestry before. Yet also there is another nobleness, which ariseth in every person, by the goodness of nature, whereby full often such as come of right poor and unnoble father and mother, have great abilities of nature to noble deeds. Above all the same there is a fourth manner of nobleness, which may be called an encreased nobleness, as by marriage and affinity of more noble persons, such as

were of less condition, may increase in higher degree of nobleness.

In every of these I suppose this countess was noble. First she came of noble blood, lineally descending of king Edward III. within the four degree of the same. Her father was John, duke of Somerset; her mother was called Margaret, right noble as well in manners as in blood, to whom she was a very daughter in all noble manners: for she was bounteous and liberal to every person of her knowledge or acquaintance. Avarice and *covetyse* she most hated, and sorrowed it full much in all persons, but specially in any that belonged unto her. She was also of singular easiness to be spoken unto, and full *curtarse*¹ answer she would make to all that came unto her. Of marvellous gentleness she was unto all folks, but specially unto her own, whom she trusted and loved right tenderly. Unkind she would not be unto no creature, *ne* forgetful of any kindness or service done to her before; which is no little part of very nobleness. She was not vengeable *ne* cruel, but ready anon to forget and to forgive injuries done unto her, at the least desire or motion made unto her for the same. Merciful also and pitteous she was unto such as was grieved and wrongfully troubled, and to them that were in poverty or sickness, or any other misery.

¹ courteous.

To God and to the church full obedient and tractable, searching his honour and pleasure full busily. A wareness of herself she had alway to eschew every thing that might dishonour any noble woman, or distain her honour in any condition. Frivolous things that were little to be regarded, she would let pass by, but the other that were of weight and substance, wherein she might profit, she would not let, for any pain or labour, to take upon hand. These and many other such noble conditions, left unto her by her ancestors, she kept and increased therein with a great diligence.

The third nobleness also she wanted not, which I said was the nobleness of nature. She had in a manner all that was praisable in a woman, either in soul or body. First, she was of singular wisdom, far passing the common rate of women. She was good in remembrance and of holding memory; a ready wit she had also to conceive all things, albeit they were right dark. Right studious she was in books, which she had in great number, both in English and in French, and for her exercise and for the profit of others, she did translate divers matters of devotion, out of the French into English. Full often she complained that in her youth, she had not given her to the understanding of Latin, wherein she had a little perceiving, specially of the *Rubryshe* of the *Ordinal*, for the saying of her service, which she did well under-

stand. Hereunto in favour, in words, in gesture, in every demeanor of herself, so great nobleness did appear, that what she spake or did, it marvellously became her.

The four nobleness, which we named a nobleness gotten or increased, she had also. For albeit, she of her lineage were right noble, yet nevertheless by marriage adjoining of other blood, it took some encreasement. For in her tender age, she being endued with so great towardness of nature, and likelihood of inheritance, many sued to have had her to marriage. The duke of Suffolk, which then was a man of great experience, most diligently procured to have had her for his son and heir. Of the contrary part, king Henry VI. did make means for Edmund his brother, then the earl of Richmond. She, which as then was not fully nine years old, doubtful in her mind what she were best to do, asked counsel of an old gentlewoman, whom she much loved and trusted, which did advise her to commend herself to St. Nicholas, the patron and helper of all true maidens, and to beseech him to put in her mind what she were best to do? This counsel she followed, and made her prayer so full often, but specially that night, when she should the morrow after make answer of her mind determinately. A marvellous thing! the same night, as I have heard her tell many a time, as she lay in prayer, calling upon St. Niche-

las, whether sleeping or waking, she could not assure, but about four of the clock in the morning, one appeared unto her, arrayed like a bishop, and naming unto her Edmund, bade take him unto her husband. And so by this means she did incline her mind unto Edmund, the king's brother, and earl of Richmond, by whom she was made mother of the king, that dead is, (whose soul God pardon,) and grand-dame to our sovereign lord king Henry VIII. which now, by the grace of God, governeth the realm. So what by lineage, what by affinity, she had thirty kings and queens within the four degree of marriage unto her; besides earls, marquisses, dukes, and princes. And thus much we have spoken of her nobleness.

* * * * *

Her sober temperance in meats and drinks was known to all them that were conversant with her, wherein she lay in as great weight of herself as any person might, keeping alway her strait measure, and offending as little as any creature might: eschewing banquets, rere-suppers, juiceries betwixt meals. As for fasting, for age and feebleness, albeit she were not bound, yet those days that by the church were appointed, she kept them diligently and seriously, and in especial the holy Lent throughout, that she restrained her appetite, till one meal of fish on the day; besides her other peculiar

fasts of devotion, as St. Anthony, St. Mary Magdalene, St. Catharine, with other; and *theroweout* all the year, the Friday and Saturday she full truly observed. As to hard clothes wearing, she had her shirts and girdles of hair, which when she was in health, every week she failed not certain days to wear, sometime the one, sometime the other, that full often her skin, as I heard her say, was pierced therewith. As for chastity, though she alway continued not in her virginity, yet in her husband's days, long time before that he died, she obtained of him license, and promised to live chaste, in the hands of the reverend father, my lord of London; which promise she renewed, after her husband's death, into my hands again, whereby it may appear the discipline of her body.

* * * * *

In prayer, every day at her uprising, which commonly was not long after five of the clock, she began certain devotions, and so after them, with one of her gentlewomen, the matins of our lady, which kept her to*—then she came into her closet, where then with her chaplain, she said also matins of the day; and after that daily heard four or five masses upon her knees; so continuing in her prayers and devotions unto the hour of dinner, which of the eating day, was ten of the clock, and upon the fasting day

* There is an omission here.

eleven. After dinner full truly she would go her stations to three altars daily ; daily her dirges and commendations she would say, and her even songs before supper, both of the day and of our lady, beside many other prayers and psalters of David throughout the year ; and at night before she went to bed, she failed not to resort unto her chapel, and there a large quarter of an hour to occupy her devotions. No marvel, though all this long time her kneeling was to her painful, and so painful that many times it caused in her back pain and disease. And yet nevertheless, daily when she was in health, she failed not to say the crown of our lady, which after the manner of Rome, containeth sixty and three *aves*, and at every *ave*, to make a kneeling. As for meditation, she had divers books in French, wherewith she would occupy herself when she was weary of prayer. Wherefore divers she did translate* out of the French into English. Her marvellous weeping, they can bear witness of, which here before have heard her confession, which be divers and many, and at many seasons in the year, lightly every third day. Can also record the same *tho* that were present at any time when she *was houshilde*¹, which was full nigh a dozen times every year, what floods of tears there issued forth of her eyes ! She might well say,

* Among which was the Mirror of Gold.

¹ Received the sacrament of the Lord's supper.

exitus aquarum deduxerunt oculi mei. And moreover to the intent all her works might be more acceptable and of greater merit in the sight of God, such godly things she would take by obedience, which obedience she promised to the forenamed father, my lord of London, for the time of his being with her, and afterwards in likewise unto me; whereby it may appear the diligent order of her soul to God.

The illustrious woman whose singular virtues and weaknesses we have been contemplating, and which are so distinctive of the age in which she lived, was a great benefactress to the commonwealth of letters. Inspired by her devotional and benevolent spirit, she first instituted at Cambridge, in the 18th of Henry VII. (her son), a perpetual public lecture in divinity, of which bishop Fischer was appointed the first reader. This lecture was endowed with twenty marks *per annum*, payable by the abbot and convent of Westminster, which house she had previously endowed with revenues to the amount of 87l. *per annum*. Fischer was succeeded in the professorship by Dr. Cosin, master of Benet; he by William Bur-

goign, afterwards master of Peter-house ; and the last by Erasmus.

The same year and day, lady Margaret established a divinity-lecture at Oxford, with the same salary, and under the same regulations, to which John Roper, S. T. P. was nominated the first reader.

In the 20th year of the same reign (Oct. 30,) she established a perpetual public preacher at Cambridge, with a salary of 10*l. per annum*, payable by the abbot and convent of Westminster, who was required to preach at least six sermons every year, at several churches, specified in the foundation, within the dioceses of London, Ely, and Lincoln. Of this establishment, John Fawn, S. T. P. was constituted the first preacher.

Having done thus much for the schools of learning, her conscience seemed disposed to be satisfied in this particular, and she began to think seriously of providing, agreeably to the superstition of the times, for the welfare of her soul, by causing masses to be said, and dirges to be chanted after her death, for its eternal health and rest. She therefore intended her other charities for the religious house at Westminster, where her son had projected a

sumptuous chapel for his own interment, and where she designed that her own remains should be also deposited. But having communicated her intentions to bishop Fischer, the great director of her charities, he represented that the house at Westminster was already wealthy enough, being the richest in England; that the schools of learning were poorly endowed, and the provisions for scholars very few and small, and that colleges were yet wanting towards their maintenance; that in such foundations she might serve two ends at once—the support of learning, and the encouragement of virtue—and that hence she would double both her charity and her reward.

These representations, aided by the habitual reverence of the countess for the opinion of her confessor, had the desired effect. Still she was under an engagement to her son, in respect of their common designs at Westminster, which her delicacy knew not how to break with honour. This difficulty the good bishop undertook to remove also; and countenanced by the letters of her ladyship, he negotiated with the king so dexterously, as to obtain his consent for altering her design. Henry's let-

ter to his mother for this purpose is still extant; and as it exhibits that prince in a more amiable light than marks his character in general history, the reader will probably be gratified with its perusal.

A Letter from the King to his Mother.

Ex Archivis Coll. Jo.

Madam, my most entirely well beloved lady and mother,

I recommend me unto you in the most humble and *lauly*¹ wise that I can, beseeching you of your daily and continual blessings. By your confessor, the bearer, I have received your good and most loving writing, and by the same have heard at good leisure, such credence as he would shew unto me on your behalf, and thereupon have sped him in every behalf without delay, according to your noble petition and desire, which resteth in two principal points: the one for a general pardon for all manner causes; the other is for to alter and change part of a license which I had given unto you before, for to be put into *mortmain* at Westminster, and now to be converted into the university of Cambridge, for your soul's health, &c. All which things, according to

¹ lowly.

your desire and pleasure, I have with all my heart and good will given and granted unto you. And my dame, not only in this, but in all other things, that I may know, should be to your honour and pleasure, and weal of your *salle*¹, I shall be as glad to please you as your heart can desire it; and I know well that I am as much bounden so to do, as any creature living, for the great and singular motherly love and affection that it hath pleased you at all times to bear towards me; wherefore mine own-most loving mother, in my most hearty manner, I thank you, beseeching you of your good continuance in the same.

And, madam, your said confessor hath moreover shewn unto me, on your behalf, that ye of your goodness and kind disposition, have given and granted unto me, such title and interest as ye have, or ought to have, in such debts and duties, which is owing and due unto you in France, by the French king and others, wherefore, madam, in my most hearty and humble wise, I thank you. Howbeit, I verily [think] it will be right hard to recover it, without it be driven by compulsion and force, rather than by any true justice, which is not yet, as we think, any convenient time to be put in execution. Nevertheless it hath pleased you to give us a good interest and mean, if they would not conform them to reason and good justice, to defend or offend at a

¹ soul.

convenient time when the case shall so require hereafter: for such a chance may fall, that this poor grant might stand in great stead for the recovery of our right, and to make us free, whereas we be now bound. And verily, madam, an I might recover it at this time or any other, ye be sure ye should have your pleasure therein, as I, and all that God has given me, is, and shall ever [be] at your will and commandment, as I have instructed master Fischer more largely herein, as I doubt not but he will declare unto you. And I beseech you to send me your mind and pleasure in the same, which I shall be full glad to follow, with God's grace, which send and give unto you the full accomplishment of all your noble and virtuous desires. Written at Greenwich, the 17th day of July, with the hand of your most humble and loving son.

H. R.

After the writing of this letter, your confessor delivered unto me such letters and writings obligatory of your duties in France, which it hath pleased you to send unto me, which I have received by an indenture of every parcel of the same. Wherefore eftsoons in my most humble wise I thank you, and purpose hereafter at better leisure, to know your mind and pleasure further therein.

Madam, I have encumbered you now with this my

long writings, but methink that I can do no less, considering that it is so selden that I do write. Wherefore, I beseech you to pardon me, for verily, madam, my sight is nothing so perfect as it has *ben*, and I know well it will *appair*¹ daily, wherefore, I trust that you will not be displeased, though I write not so often with my own hand, for on my faith I have *ben* three days or I could make an end of this letter.

To my Lady.

These proceedings gave birth to the foundation of Christ's College, Cambridge, in the year 1505-6, to which Fischer was appointed, after herself, visitor for life. The first master of this college, was John Syclyng, who was to shew his obedience to the foundress's statutes, (as expressed in his original obligation,) "by not procuring or causing to be procured, or not using, being procured, any dispensations from the apostolic see; or (as much as in him was,) not suffering his fellows to make use of them." This instrument bears date September 5th, 22d of Henry VII.

About this time the lady Margaret was strongly solicited by some respectable members

¹ impair.

of Oxford, to confer her remaining charities upon that university; who pointed out to her St. Frideswid's priory, (which occupied the site of the present Christ Church,) as a proper field for her munificent donations. But bishop Fischer called her attention again to Cambridge; and St. Frideswid was left to adorn the memory of cardinal Wolsey.

The old house of St. John, at Cambridge, presents a striking instance of the dissolute extravagance of some of the ancient monasteries. When the ordinary revenues of this house became inadequate to its prodigal expenditure, the moveables were either pawned or sold, and even the sacred vessels incurred the profanation of being exposed to sale. These resources were soon at an end. Many of the lands were then alienated, the rest mortgaged, and at length, its funds exhausted and its credit lost, the master and brethren were obliged to disperse, and the house was abandoned. In this state of things bishop Fischer conceived that it would be more for the interests of religion and of learning, that it should be dissolved by royal authority, and that a college of secular students should be engrafted upon the old stock, in the hope that it might pro-

duce better fruit. He succeeded in interesting his noble patroness in his design, and St. John's college was projected; but before the royal license could be obtained for this purpose, his majesty died, and not long after lady Margaret herself. The execution of the design, however, was left in the hands of trustees, of which Fischer was the chief; but the institution was postponed for some time, from various causes. Henry VIII. cast an eye of cupidity upon the lands bequeathed by his grandmother for the foundation; Stanley, bishop of Ely, the diocesan, now opposed the dissolution of the old house, from a tenderness and fellow-feeling for the infirmities of his brethren; it was nevertheless dissolved January 20, 1510, by a bull from Julius II. which condescended to notice neither the authority of the king, nor of the bishop of Ely. The charter was granted in April of the year following, for the establishment of a college, *Unius magistri, sociorum et scholarium ad numerum quinquaginta secularium personarum, vel circa, in scientiis liberalibus, et sacrâ theologiâ studentium et oratorum.*

The revenues appropriated by lady Margaret's will, for the maintenance of this col-

lege, amounted to 400*l. per annum*—a very large sum in those days. But the executors were soon compelled to resign all the lands to the rapacity of the king; and the society must have been again dissolved, or at least much reduced its establishment, if Fischer had not luckily found some trifling compensation in the revenues of a small dissolved house at Ospring, in Kent. These amounted, indeed, to no more than 70*l.* a year; but which, with a few other inconsiderable helps, proved sufficient, under good management, to continue the college on its original plan.

Collegians of the present day will wonder how so large a society, consisting chiefly of fellows, (for at first there were few scholars,) could be supported upon such a slender income. But when they are told that only twelve pence per week was allowed in commons to a fellow, and but seven pence to a scholar; that 120*l.* was enough to found a fellowship; and that 6*l. per annum* sufficed for the maintenance of a fellow—their astonishment will cease. Its revenues were soon greatly improved by the assiduous attention and prudent management of Robert Shoreton, the first master. This college distinguished itself for its zeal and spirit during

the reformation; and more ministers were ejected from it than from any other society in the university—an effect very different from what the foundress and her good confessor had designed to produce.

The following lines, composed probably by a monk of Westminster, were found deposited among other documents, in the foundress's chest at St. John's College; and as they contain an accurate, though succinct account of her foundations, it may be worth while to give them a place:—

Carmen Phalecium Hendecasyllabum.

Hic illa est sita Margareta Gnato

Henrico inclyta septimo, nepote

Octavo { Comitissa Richmondæ
Comes alta Richmondæ
Richmondiana Rectrix.

Censura contulit annum duobus

Qui docti sophiam sacram explicarent

Ille Oxonibus, ille Cantabrigis;

His Collegia bina struxit, ambo

Quæ* centum foveant decemq; alumnos.

Doctorem instituit rudi popello,

Qui Christum sine fine buccinetur.

* Sixty at Christ's College, and fifty at St. John's.

Royndorni ære suo, novam tenellæ
Pubi, grammatices scholam paravit.
Demum * hîc tres monachos alit benigna,
His ac talibus illa viva factis,
Fortunam superavit eminentem.

I conceive that these few particulars relative to the foundations of the lady Margaret, are not misplaced, since they are obviously connected with the learning of the period, and with the biography of bishop Fischer, without whose wise direction, the good intentions of that lady might have evaporated in a selfish piety, or at best in a vague benevolence. The reader may now judge of the validity of his title to be ranked among the first and most active restorers of ancient learning in England†.

* At Westminster.

† This account is abstracted from the preface to his sermon at lady Margaret's funeral ; and which was compiled by the editor from original documents repositied among the archives of St. John's College, Cambridge. The book, I apprehend, is scarce ; I met with it by accident, after having searched for it in vain.

SIR THOMAS MORE,*Chancellor of England,*

BORN in London in 1480, was son of sir John More, knight, one of the judges of King's Bench. He received the first part of his education at St. Anthony's, Thread-needle-street, and was afterwards admitted into the family of cardinal Morton, archbishop of Canterbury, who was accustomed to say of him to his guests—"This boy who waits at table, whoever lives to see it, will prove a marvellous man." In 1497, he entered at Oxford, where he continued two years, and then, being designed for the law, removed to New Inn, London; and soon after, to Lincoln's Inn, of which his father was a member.

About the age of twenty, he became disgusted with the law, and shut himself up, during four years, in the Charter-house, devoting

himself exclusively to the services of religion. At this period he was so bigotted to monkish superstitions, and monkish discipline, that, like lady Margaret, he wore a hair-shirt next his skin, (which he is said never afterwards to have wholly laid aside,) fasted often, and not unfrequently slept on a bare plank. He had a strong inclination to take orders, and even to turn Franciscan ; but was over-ruled by his father, whose authority was moreover reinforced by the amorous propensities of the son, which were not to be subdued even by the austerities of the cloister. Accordingly he married Jane, eldest daughter of John Colt, esq. of New-hall, Essex. About this period, too, he was appointed law reader at Furnival's Inn, which he held for three years ; and besides, read a public lecture in the church of St. Laurence, Old Jewry, upon St. Austin's treatise *De Civitate Dei*.

At the age of two and twenty, he was elected member of the parliament called by Henry VII. in 1503, to demand a subsidy and nine fifteenths, for the marriage of Margaret, his eldest daughter, to James, king of Scotland. More opposed this demand with such force of argument, that it was finally rejected by the

house. In 1508, he was made judge of the Sheriff's Court; also a justice of the peace, and became eminent at the bar. In 1516, he went to Flanders, in the retinue of bishop Tonsal and doctor Knight, who were sent by Henry to renew the alliance with the archduke of Austria, afterwards Charles V. On his return he was offered a pension by cardinal Wolsey, which, however, he thought proper to refuse; though soon after accepted of the king, the place of master of the requests. About this time also his majesty conferred on him the honour of knighthood, appointed him one of his privy council, and admitted him to the greatest personal familiarity. In 1520, he was made treasurer of the exchequer; and about the same period built a house at Chelsea, on the banks of the Thames; and being now a widower, married a second wife. In 1523, a parliament being summoned to raise money for a war with France, he was elected speaker of the house of commons; and in this character opposed, with great firmness, and with equal success, an oppressive subsidy demanded by the minister, cardinal Wolsey. He was sent, in 1526, with cardinal Wolsey and others, on a joint embassy to France; and in 1528, was

made chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster. On the following year, his majesty appointed him, together with Tonsal, bishop of Durham, ambassadors, to negotiate a peace between the emperor, Henry, and the king of France; and in the peace hence resulting, concluded at Cambray, he obtained for the kingdom advantages so far beyond what had been expected, that the king, on the disgrace of cardinal Wolsey, gave him the great seal on the 25th of October of the same year; and it is remarkable, that he was the first layman who had ever obtained that honour. But perceiving, from the measures pursued by the king in respect of his divorce from queen Catharine, that a final rupture with Rome would be inevitable, and that himself, from his office, must be entangled in the contest, he resigned the seal, after having sustained his high dignity only two years and a half. On the passing of the act of supremacy, in 1534, he refused to take the required oath, and he died on the block, a martyr to catholicism, on the 5th of July, 1535.

Sir Thomas retained his hilarity, and even his habitual facetiousness, to the last; and made a sacrifice of his life to his integrity, with all

the indifference he would have shewn in an ordinary affair. "Nothing is wanting (says Hume) to the glory of this end, but a better cause, more free from weakness and superstition. But as the man followed his principles and sense of duty, however misguided, his constancy and integrity are not the less objects of our admiration."—The following couplet, which is attributed to him, will serve to indicate the habitual state of mind, which enabled him to meet his fate with a fortitude so admirable :

If evils come, then our fears are vain;
And if they do, fear but augments the pain.

A large portion of the writings of sir Thomas More are in Latin, of which a collection in folio was published at Basil, in 1566; and the year following, at Louvain. Among this number is his *Eutopia*, his most celebrated work, which was written in 1516, and first published at Basil in 1518; at least this is the first edition of which we have any account. From this book it appears that in the early part of his life he was a free thinker, though he was subsequently devoted to catholic principles. It was composed during the greatest hurry of his professional business; and at this

period he stole time from his sleep, to pursue his studies.

The *Eutopia* was translated into several languages, and added greatly to the fame of his talents. A translation of it in English appeared in 1624, by Ralph Robinson; and in 1683, by bishop Burnet, with a preface concerning the nature of translations.

The age of More was the age of discoveries; and his *Eutopia* was taken by the learned Budæus and others, for true history. They thought it expedient, that missionaries should be sent out to convert so wise a people to Christianity.

It has been already noticed, in the preceding article, as a prevalent opinion at the time, that sir Thomas assisted the king in the composition of his celebrated book against Martin Luther, by which he obtained the title of "Defender of the Faith;" and it is certain that the king afterwards charged him with having been the cause of its being written. But the charge appears to be ill founded; though it is affirmed on good authority, that the book was methodized by More. It was entitled, *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum, adversus Martinum Lutherum, &c.* and published in 1521. Luther,

in his reply, regardless of the rank of his royal antagonist, treated it with the utmost contempt and ridicule. This drew from More his *Responsio ad Convitia M. Lutheri congesta in Henricum Regem Angliæ*. Of this book it was said, that its author had the best knack of any man in Europe, at calling bad names in good Latin.

His other Latin works need not be particularly mentioned. They consist of—1. *Lucubrationes*, published at Basil, 1563, 8vo.—2. *Precationes ex Psalmis*.—3. *Epist. ad Academ. Oxon.*—4. *Epistolæ*, Lond. 1642, folio, &c.

The English writings of sir Thomas More are polemical and historical; from both of which it will be proper to give a copious extract, as he is the first writer of eminence, subsequent to the revival of letters, who condescended to give much attention to the culture of his native language. To this he was probably induced, in the first instance, not by a direct intention of improving his own tongue, but by motives similar to those which actuated Wicliffe—that he might give greater popularity to his peculiar theological opinions. More was the redoubted champion of the catholics.

1. "A Dialogue of sir Thomas More, knight, one of the council of our sovereign lord the king, and chancellor of his duchy of Lancaster. Wherein be treated divers matters ; as of the veneration and worship of images and relics, praying to saints, and going on pilgrimage ; with many other things touching the pestilent sect of Luther and Tyndale ; by the *tone* begun in Saxony, and by the *tother* laboured to be brought into England ; newly overseen by the said sir Thomas More, chancellor of England, 1530."

This Dialogue is supposed to take place between sir Thomas, and the tutor of the children of his friend, who had dispatched him to More, with a letter of credence, with the express purpose that they should discuss in conversation the various points contested between the Catholics and Lutherans.

The following extract forms the first chapter of the fourth book.

When we had after dinner a little paused, your friend and I drew ourself aside into the garden. And there sitting down in an arbour, he began to enter forth into the matter, saying, that he had well perceived, that not in his country only, but also in

the university where he had been, there were that had none ill opinion of Luther; but thought that his books were, by the clergy, *forboden*¹ of malice and evil will, to the end that folks should not surely see, and perfectly perceive what he saith, or at the least, what thing he meaneth by his words;—which will not appear they think by a line taken out in the *myddys*² of a leaf, but by the diligent consideration of the whole matter. Without which men might impute a wrong blame, they say, to the best writers that ever wrote in this world. But they think that the clergy will not have his books read, because that in them laymen may read the priests' faults, which was, they say, the very cause of the condemnation. For else, whether he had written well or evil, yet they say his books had been kept in men's hands and read. For there is, they think, therein, though some part were nought, many things yet well said; whereof there was no reason that men should *lese* the profit for the bad. And also reason men think it were, that all were heard that can be said touching the truth to be knowen, concerning the matters of our salvation, to the intent that all heard and perceived, men may, for their own surety, the better *chese* and hold the right way.

Forsooth, quod I, if it were now doubtful and ambiguous whether the church of Christ were in the

¹ forbidden.

² midst.

right rule of doctrine or not, then were it very necessary to give them all good audience that could and would any thing dispute, on either party, for it or against it, to the end that if we were now in a wrong way, we might leave it and walk in some better. But now, on the other side, if it so be, as indeed it is, that Christ's church hath the true doctrine already, and the self same, that St. Paul would not give an angel of heaven audience to the contrary; what wisdom were it now therein to shew ourself so mistrustful and wavering, that for to search whether our faith were false or true, we should give hearing not to an angel of heaven, but to a fond friar; to an apostate; to an open incestuous lecher; a plain limb of the devil; and a manifest messenger of hell. In which words, if ye would haply think that I use myself too sore, to call him by such odious names, ye must consider that he spareth not, both untruly, and without necessity, in his railing books, to call by as evil, them whom his duty were highly to reverence; whereas I do, between us twain, call him but as himself hath shewed him in his writing, in his living, and in his mad marriage. And yet I neither do it, nor would, were it not that the matter self of reason doth require it. For my part is it, of necessity, to tell how nought he is; because that the worse the man is, the more madness were it for wise men to give his false fables hearkening,

against God's undoubted truth, by his holy spirit taught unto his church, and by such multitude of miracles; by so much blood of holy martyrs; by the virtuous living of so many blessed confessors; by the purity and cleanness of so many chaste widows and undefouled virgins; by the wholesome doctrine of so many holy doctors; and finally, by the whole consent and agreement of all Christian people this fifteen hundred years confirmed. And, therefore, not any respect unto his railing against the clergy is, as some would have it seem, the cause of his condemnation and suppression of his books: for the good men of the clergy be not so sore grieved with them that touch the faults of the bad, nor the bad themselves be not so tender-eared, that for the only talking of their faults, they would banish the books that were good in other things beside: for else could not the books of many old holy fathers have endured so long, wherein the vices of them that in the clergy be nought, be very vehemently rebuked. But the very cause why his books be not suffered to be read is, because his heresies be so many and so abominable, and the proofs wherewith he pretendeth to make them probable, be so far from reason and truth, and so far against the right understanding of holy scripture, whereof, under colour of great zeal and affection, he laboureth to destroy the credence and good use, and finally so far stretcheth all thing against good man-

ner and virtue, provoking the world to wrong opinions of God, and boldness in sin and wretchedness, that there can no good, but much harm, grow by the reading. For if there were the substance good, and of error or oversight some cockle among the corn, which might be sifted out, and the remnant stand instead, men would have been content therewith, as they be with such other. But now is his not besprent with a few spots, but with more than half venom poisoned the whole wine, and that right rotten of itself. And this done of purpose and malice, not without an evil spirit in such wise walking with his words, that the contagion thereof were likely to infect a feeble soul, as the savour of a sickness sore infecteth a whole body. Nor the truth is not to be learned of every man's mouth: for as Christ was not content that the devil should call him God's son, though it were true, so is he not content a devil's limb, as Luther is, or Tyndale, should teach his flock the truth, for infecting them with their false devilish heresies besides. For likewise as the holy scripture of God, because of the good spirit that made it, is of his own nature apt to purge and amend the reader, though some that read it, of their invincible malice, turn it to their harm; so do such writings as Luther's is, in the making whereof the devil is of council, and giveth therewith a breath of his assistance, though the goodness of some men master

the malice thereof, walking harmless with God's help, as the prophet saith, upon the serpent and the cockatrice, and treading upon the lion and the dragon; yet be such works of themselves always right unwholsome to meddle with, mete and apt to corrupt and infect the reader. For the proof whereof we need none other example than this that we be in hand with all, if we consider what good the reading of his books hath done in Saxony. And this find we more than too much proved here among us, that of ten that use to read his books, ye shall scanty find twain but that they not only cast off prayer and fasting, and all such godly virtues as holy scripture commendeth, and the church commandeth, and virtuous people have ever had in great price, but also fall in plain contempt and hatred thereof. So that what fruit should grow of the reading, ye may soon guess.

In the third chapter of the same book, the author canvasses the motives of Luther.

Now that is somewhat worth to consider, how this lewd friar began to fall in the mischievous matters. We shall understand that there was a pardon, as the manner is there, Luther was the preacher, and preached to the people, exhorting them thereto,

and avancing the authority thereof all that he possible might, not without his great advantage therefore. So happed it, that soon after that the setting forth of the pardon with the advantage thereof was taken from him and set to another. For anger whereof he fell into such a fury, that forthwith he began to write against all pardons. Howbeit, because the matter was new and strange, he began first by way of doubts and questions only, submitting himself and his writing to the judgment of the pope, and desiring to be enformed of the truth. Whereupon, when he was by writing answered by the master of the pope's palace, then waxed he more *wood*¹, and fell to railing against him, and made also another book against the power of the pope, affirming, that his power upon the church was never institute of God, but ordained only by the common consent of Christian people, for avoiding of schisms. But yet he said that all Christian men were bounden to stand and obey thereunto, and that the Bohemes were damnable heretics for doing the contrary. But soon after, when he was in such wise answered by good and cunning men, that he perceiyed himself unable to defend that he had affirmed, then fell he from reasoning to railing, and utterly denied that he had before affirmed. And than began to write that the pope

¹ wrath.

had no power at all, neither by God nor man. And that the Bohemes, whom he had in his writings before called damnable heretics, were good christians, and all their opinions good and catholic. Then when he was cited by the pope's holiness to appear, he appealed to the next general council, which should be gathered in the Holy Ghost. So that whatsoever general council were after assembled, he might jest and rail thereon, and say that was not that that he appealed unto: for that was not assembled in the Holy Ghost.

He took, (quod your friend,) a good wily way.

As wily as it was, (quod I,) yet would he not stand thereby, but fled from that to another. Now shall ye understand, that yet soon after this, in the book be which he not answereth, but railleth against that book wherein our sovereign lord the king, like a most faithful, virtuous, and most erudite prince, evidently and effectually revinced and confuted the most venomous and pestilent book of Luther, entitled, The Captivity of Babylon, in which he laboured to destroy the holy sacraments of Christ's church. In that book, I say, Luther, which had before appealed to the next general council, utterly denieth the authority of all general councils, and setteth them all at no weight.

By my troth, (quod your friend,) either was the man very negligent before, or very naught after, when he changeth so often, and writeth ever the longer the more.

contrary, not to his adversary only, but also to himself.

But I pray you how excuseth he his inconstancy?

Marry, (quod, I,) he saith, that he seeth farther than he saw before. Whereunto the king's grace sheweth him that it were unlikely that he should see better through a pair of evil spectacles of ire and envy.

Very true, (quod your friend,) by my troth. But yet I hear say that he hath offered to stand at the judgment of learned men in all his matters, if his offer had *ben* taken in time.

Indeed, (quod I,) once he promised to stand to the judgment of the university of Paris, and thereupon was there open disputations kept, and the very words written by notaries sworn for both the parties. But when his opinions were after, at Paris, by the university condemned, then he refused to stand to their judgment, and fell again to his old craft of railing. He appeared also at Worms, before the emperor and the princes of the empire, by a safe conduct. And there recognised and knowledged, as well the said pestilent book written against the sacraments, as many other of like sort to be his own, and offered to abide by them. Which he might boldly do, being by the safe conduct in good surety of himself that he could take none harm. Then was he moved to disputations upon the articles, so that he should agree upon some persons virtuous and well learned, that should be judges of that disputations,

and that he should be content to stand to their judgment upon the same. Whereupon he agreed [to come to disputations, but he would in no wise agree to make any men living judges upon that, nor stand to no man's judgment earthly.

This dialogue of the worship of images, &c. was replied to by Tyndale; which called forth—
2. sir Thomas's "Confutation of Tyndale's Answer;" Lond. 1533, folio.—These treatises are pervaded with all the absurdities of catholicism.

3. In this list ought also to be enumerated, his "Dialogue on Tribulation."

But the English work to which alone posterity is indebted to him, is his "History of Edward V. and his Brother, and of Richard III."—This work was begun before he had finished his *Eutopia*, but was never completed. According to Grafton, it was written in 1508.

The preceding extract is remarkable chiefly as affording an example of the fermentation of religious opinion which distinguished the age; the following may be regarded as a fair specimen of stile, and of the state of the language,

in addition to the interest of the narrative itself.

*Description of the Person and Character of
Richard the Third.*

Richard, the third son, of whom we now entreat, was in wit and courage *egal*¹ with either of them, in body and prowess, far under them both; little of stature, ill-featured of limbs, crook-backed, his left shoulder much higher than his right, hard-favoured of visage, as such as in states called *warlye*; in other men otherwise. He was malicious, wrathful, envious, and from afore his birth, ever froward. It is for truth reported, that the duchess his mother had so much ado in her travail, that she could not be delivered of him uncut; and that he came into the world with the feet forward, as men be borne outward; and (as the fame runneth) also not untoothed; (whether men of hatred report above the truth, or else that nature changed her course in his beginning, which, in the course of his life, many things unnaturally committed.)

None evil captain was he in the war, as to which his disposition was more meetly than for peace. Sundry victories had he, and sometime overthrows;

¹ equal.

but never in default for his own person, either of hardiness or politic order. Free was he called of dispense, and somewhat above his power liberal. With large gifts he *get* him unsteadfast friendship, for which he was fain to *pil* and spoil in other places, and get him stedfast hatred. He was close and secret; a deep dissimuler, lowly of countenance, arrogant of heart; outwardly *coumpinable* where he inwardly hated, not letting to kiss whom he thought to kill; dispitious and cruel, not for evil will alway; but after for ambition, and either for the surety and increase of his estate. Friend and foe was much what indifferent, where his advantage grew; he spared no man's death whose life withstood his purpose. He slew with his own hands king Henry VI. being prisoner in the Tower.

It will be recollected that the earl of Rivers, uncle and guardian of the young king, had been arrested by orders from the duke of Gloucester; and that the queen, alarmed at this act of violence in the protector, had fled to the sanctuary of Westminster, with the five princesses, and the duke of York. Richard resolving, as the first step to his usurpation, to get both the young princes into his hands,

dispatched the two archbishops, cardinal Bourchier, the primate, and Rotherham, archbishop of York, to the queen, to prevail upon her, if possible, without violence, to accede to his proposals. These prelates being men of integrity and honour, were the dupes of Gloucester's artifice; and undertook the commission in the full persuasion of the good intentions of their employer. The following is an account of their interview with the queen, which possesses considerable interest. The cardinal, having delivered his message—

My lord, (quod the queen,) I say not nay; but that it were very convenient that this gentleman, whom ye require, were in the company of the king, his brother. And in good faith, me thinketh, it were as great commodity to them as for yet awhile to *ben* in the custody of their mother, the tender age considered of the elder of them both; but special the younger, which, besides his infancy, that also needeth good looking to, hath awhile been so sore diseased, vexed with sickness, and is so newly rather a little amended than well recovered, that I dare put no person earthly in trust with his keeping but myself only; considering that there is, as physicians say, and as we also find, double the peril in the recidivation, that was in the first sickness, with which

disease nature being forlaboured, forwearied, and weaked, waxeth the less able to bear out a new surfeit. And albeit, there might be founden other that would haply do their best unto him; yet is there none that either knoweth better how to order him than I that so long have kept him; or is more tenderly like to cherish him than his own mother that bare him.

The primate, among other things, then observing that it was inexpedient the child should be always with his mother; and that herself was *well content* that the young king should be removed to Wales—

Not very content, (quod the queen,) and yet the case is not like: for the *tone* was then in health, and the *tother* is now sick. In which case, I marvel greatly that my lord protector is so desirous to have him in his keeping, where if the child in his sickness miscarried by nature, yet might he run into slander and suspicion, or fraud. And where they call it a thing so sore against my child's honour and theirs also, that he bideth in this place; it is all their honours there to suffer him bide where no man doubteth he shall be best kept. And that is here, while I am here, which as yet intend not to come forth, and *jubarde*¹ myself after other of my friends;

¹ endanger, put in jeopardy.

which, would God! were rather here in surety with me, than I were there in *jubardy* with them.

Why, madam, (quod another lord,) know you any thing why they should be in *jubardy*?

Nay, verily, sir, (quod she,) nor why they should be in prison neither, as they now be. But it is, I trow, no great marvel, tho' I fear, lest those that have not *letted*¹ to put them in *duresse*² without colour, will let as little to procure their destruction without cause.

The cardinal made a continuance to the *tother* lord, that he should harp no more upon that string. And then, said he to the queen, that he nothing doubted but that those lords of her honourable kin, which as yet remained under arrest, should, upon the matter examined, do well enough. And as toward her noble person, neither was nor could be any manner *jubardy*.

Whereby should I trust that (quod the queen,) in that I am guiltless? As tho' they were guilty—in that I am with their enemies better beloved than they? when they hate them for my sake—in that I am so near of kin to the king? and how far be they off, if that would help, as God send grace it hurt not. And, therefore, as for me, I purpose not as yet to depart hence. And as for this gentleman, my son, I mind that he shall be where I am, till I

¹ hindered.

² durance.

see further: for I assure you, for that I see some men so greedy, without any substantial cause, to have him, this maketh me much the more *farder*¹ to deliver him.

Truly, madam, (quod he,) and the *farder* that you be to deliver him, the *farder ben* other men to suffer you to keep him, lest your causeless fear might cause you farther to convey him. And many be there that think that he can have no privilege in this place, which neither can have will to ask it, nor malice to deserve it. And therefore they reckon no privilege broken, tho' they fetch him out; which if ye finally refuse to deliver him, I verily believe they will. So much dread hath my lord, his uncle, for the tender love he beareth him, lest your grace should hap to send him away.

Ah sir! (quod the queen,) hath the protector so tender zeal to him, that he feareth nothing lest he should escape him! Thinketh he that I would send him hence, which neither is in the plight to send out? And in what place could I reckon him sure, if he be not sure in this *sentuary*, whereof was there never tyrant yet so devilish, that durst presume to break; and I trust God, as strong now, to withstand his adversaries, as ever he was. But my son can deserve no *sentuary*, and therefore he cannot have it. Forsooth, he hath founden a goodly *glose*² by which

¹ more loth.

² gloss.

that place that may defend a thief, may not save an innocent. But he is in no *jubardy*, nor hath no need thereof. Would God he had not! Troweth the protector, (I pray God he may prove a protector,) troweth he that I perceive not whereunto his painted process draweth? It is not honourable that the duke bide here. It were comfortable for them both, that he were with his brother, because the king lacketh a playfellow, be ye sure. I pray God send them both better playfellows than him, that maketh so high a matter upon such a trifling pretext: as tho' there could none be found to play with the king, *but if* his brother, that hath no *lust*¹ to play for sickness, come out of *sentuary*, out of his safeguard to play with him. As tho' princes, as young as they be, could not play but with their peers, or children could not play but with their kindred, with whom for the more part they agree much worse than with strangers. But the child cannot require the privilege; who told him so? He shall here him ask it an he will.

Howbeit this is a *gay*² matter. Suppose he could not ask it, suppose he would not ask it, suppose he would ask to go out; if I say he shall not; if I ask the privilege but for myself, I say, he that against my will taketh out him, breaketh the *sentuary*. Serveth this liberty for my person only, or for my goods too? Ye may not hence take my

¹ desire.² light.

horse *fro* me. He is also my ward: for as my learned council sheweth me, *syth* he hath nothing by descent holden by knight's service, the law maketh his mother his *gardaine*¹. Then may no man, I suppose, take my ward *fro* me out of *sentuary*, without the breach of the *sentuary*. And if my privilege could not serve him, nor he ask it for himself, yet *syth* the law committeth to me the custody of him, I may require it for him; except the law give a child a guardian only for his goods and his lands, discharging him of the cure and safe keeping of his body, for which only both lands and goods serve. And if examples be sufficient to obtain privilege for my child, I need not far to seek. For in this place in which we now be, (and which is now in question whether my child may take benefit of it,) mine other son, now king, was born, and kept in his cradle, and preserved to a more prosperous fortune, which I pray God long to continue. And as all you know, this is not the first time that I have taken *sentuary*: for when my lord, my husband, was banished, and thrust out of his kingdom, I fled hither, being great with child, and here I bare the prince. And when my lord, my husband, returned safe again, and had the victory, then went I hence to welcome him home; and from hence I brought my babe, the prince, unto his father, when he first took him in

¹ guardian.

his arms. And I pray God that my son's palace may be as great safeguard to him now reigning, as this place was some time to the king's enemy. In which place I intend to keep his brother *sith*, &c.

Wherefore, here intend I to keep him, since man's law serveth the guardian to keep the infant. The law of nature will the mother keep her child. God's law privilegeeth the *sentuary*, and the *sentuary* my son, *sith* I fear to put him in the protector's hands, that hath his brother already, and were, if both failed, inheritor to the crowns. The cause of my fear hath no man to do to examine. And yet fear I no farther them that law feareth, which as learned men tell me, forbiddeth every man the custody of them by whose death he may inherit less land than a kingdom. I can no more; but whosoever he be that breaketh this holy *sentuary*, I pray God shortly send him need of *sentuary*, when he may not come to it: for taken out of *sentuary* would I not my mortal enemy were.

The cardinal perceiving the emotion of the queen, and the little progress he made with her, was desirous of putting an end to the conference; and assured her, as his final conclusion, that if she would consent to deliver the duke to him and the other lords then present, he "durst lay his own body and soul both in

pledge, not only for his surety, but also for his estate." The queen now finding the protector himself at hand, conceiving resistance fruitless, and not doubting the faith of the cardinal, nor that of some other of the attendant lords, at length, taking the young duke by the hand—

My lord, (quod she,) and all my lords, I neither am so unwise to mistrust your wits, nor so suspicious to mistrust your truths. Of which thing I purpose to make you such a proof, as if either of both lacked in you, might turn both me to great sorrow, the realm to much harm, and you to great reproach. For lo! here is (quod she,) this gentleman, whom I doubt not I could here keep safe, if I would, whatsoever any man say. And I doubt not also, that there be some abroad so deadly enemies unto my blood, that if they wist where any of it lay in their own body, they would let it out. We have also had experience that the desire of a kingdom knoweth no kindred. The brother hath been the brother's bane. And may the nephews be sure of their uncle? Each of these children is others defence while they be asunder, and each of their lives lieth in the other's body. Keep one safe, and both be sure; and nothing for them both more perilous, than to be both in one place. For what wise merchant ventureth all his goods in one ship? All this

notwithstanding, here I deliver him, and his brother in him, to keep into your hands, of whom I shall ask them both afore God and the world. Faithful ye be, that wot I well; and I know well you be wise. Power and strength to keep him, if ye list, neither lack ye of yourself, nor can lack help in their cause. And if ye cannot elsewhere, then may you leave him here. But only one thing I beseech you, for the trust that his father put in you ever, and for the trust that I put in you now, that as far as ye think that I fear too much, be you well ware that you fear not as far too little. And therewithal, she said unto the child: Farewell my own sweet son; God send you good keeping; let me kiss you once yet ere you go: for God knoweth when we shall kiss together again. And therewith she kissed him, and blessed him; turned her back and wept, and went her way, leaving the child weeping as fast.

This history, though first published in English, afterwards appeared in Latin, the language in which it is supposed to have been first composed. The English copy is inserted in Hall, Grafton, Holinshed, and Stow; that in the Complete History of England, by Kennet, is (as observed by Laing,) "a licentious and

faulty paraphrase by himself or Strype, which has with most authors superseded the original."

Hume, in note [M] to the third volume of his history, where he discusses the question of Perkin Warbeck's imposture, has occasion to speak of sir Thomas More, who is the principal authority. He says, "Though the circumstances of the wars between the two Roses be, in general, involved in great obscurity, yet'is there a most luminous ray thrown on all the transactions, during the usurpation of Richard, and the murder of the two young princes, by the narrative of sir Thomas More, whose singular magnanimity, probity, and judgment, make him an evidence beyond all exception! No historian, either of ancient or modern times, can possibly have more weight. He may also be justly esteemed a contemporary with regard to the murder of the two princes: for though he was but five years of age when that event happened, he lived and was educated among the chief actors during the period of Richard: and it is plain, from his narrative itself, which is often extremely circumstantial, that he had the particulars from the eye witnesses themselves. His authority therefore is irresistible, and sufficient to overba-

lance a hundred little doubts and scruples and objections. For in reality, his narrative is liable to no solid objection, nor is there any mistake detected in it." We may add, that it has been followed and almost transcribed by every subsequent compiler.

Notwithstanding these confident assertions of Hume, the question of the authenticity of sir Thomas's narrative, has given rise to much controversy. The first who ventured to dispute the account of Richard's usurpation, &c. which had been so long received as genuine history, was Buck, in his "Life and Reign of Richard III." in which he not only asserts the innocence of that prince, but even denies the extreme deformity of person, with which he had hitherto been described. But as the establishment of this historic point necessarily invalidated the title of the reigning family*, it's right of inheritance deriving

* Buck lived in the reign of James I. to whom he was one of the gentlemen of the privy chamber; he was also knighted by that prince, and appointed master of the revels. He wrote likewise, 2. "The Third University of England; or, a Treatise of the Foundation of all the Colleges, ancient Schools of Privilege, and of Houses of Learning and liberal Arts, within and

from Henry VII.'s daughter, he felt himself under the necessity of finding a new title for James, in his descent from the Saxon monarchs—from Margaret, the sister of Edgar Atheling, married to Malcolm Canmore.

The same view of this dark period has been taken by Carte, in his *History of England*; and by Horace Walpole, in his "*Historic Doubts*," who has illustrated it with new arguments. More recently, Mr. Laing has examined the subject with a minuteness and accuracy which so peculiarly distinguish all the historical researches of that gentleman*.

The object of the present work precludes long discussions of this nature; but having given place to the passage from Hume, which expresses the common opinion, it were unjust to the reader not to exhibit also the general inferences of Mr. Laing. He begins with observing, that the controversy resolves into four general divisions; 1. The crimes attributed to

about the most famous City of London, with a brief Report of the Sciences, Arts, and Faculties therein professed, studied, and practiced."—3. Also, a Treatise of the Art of Revels.

* See Appendix to the 12th Vol. of Henry's *History of England*; Lond. 1799.

Richard's youth; 2. His usurpation, or acquisition of the crown; 3. The fate of his nephews; 4. The pretensions and character of Perkin Warbeck:—relative to all which points, he concludes respectively; 1. That an impartial historian must exculpate Richard from the crimes of his early youth—the murder of Henry VI.—of his son, prince Edward, and perhaps of Clarence; 2. That instead of a perjured traitor, we recognise the legitimate sovereign of England; 3. That the account of the murder of the young princes is false; 4. And that Perkin Warbeck was a genuine Plantagenet—the real duke of York—not an impostor, according to received history.

In this able disquisition, the source is detected whence More derived his spurious documents. It has been commonly supposed that sir Thomas's information was traditionary—gleaned from his intercourse with Richard's cotemporaries. But Mr. Laing observes, “that a tradition recorded by Harrington (1596,) assigns his history to Morton, (Malone's *Shakespeare*, vol 5, p. 562,) and a Latin history of Richard, composed by that prelate, was preserved in the last century, by Roper, a descendent of More, to whom, as a favourite

pupil*, the book had devolved. (Buck *apud* Kennet, 546.) That such was the source of his information, the *substratum* on which he constructed his history, is farther confirmed by the English edition; which extending beyond the period of Richard's accession, comprehends the murder of his nephews, the secret disaffection of Buckingham, and terminates abruptly in the midst of an interesting conversation between the latter and Morton. The conversation is resumed and continued by Hall and Grafton, in a manner equally minute and circumstantial, nor apparently less authentic; and as the particulars could only be obtained from Morton, I conclude that they and More had access to the same original information, and attribute the materials of the history in question to Morton; the ornamental and classical varnish to More. This discovery may exculpate More from the imputation of propagating deliberate falsehood. Not a spectator merely, but an actor†, chiefly instrumental in Richard's destruction, Morton's knowledge and intentional misrepresentation of Edward's marriage, and

* We have already seen that More was educated in the house of Morton.

† Morton was a Lancastrian.

Richard's title, bestows additional confirmation on both," &c.—I shall now simply express my opinion, that whosoever pays the requisite attention to the detail of Mr. Laing's arguments, will be convinced with me, that the positions he has established are founded in truth.

More's English works were collected by order of queen Mary, and published in 1557.

Though this article is already extended to perhaps a disproportionate length, a few particulars relative to the person and character of so illustrious a man may not be unacceptable. The person of sir Thomas More was of the middle stature, and exactly proportioned; his complexion fair, with a light tincture of red; his hair dark chesnut; his eyes grey; his general aspect smiling and festive, rather than grave or dignified; but there was nothing in it of the low and scurrilous. His moral character, disconnected from his religious opinions, was unimpeachable; his benevolence was warm and diffusive; and he had the most generous contempt for riches and external honours. Though of all the servants and favorites of Henry VIII. he obtained the greatest

share of his attention and kind offices, though he had filled such a number of honorable and dignified stations during a period of twenty years, he had not accumulated, at his final resignation of all public business, property enough to purchase a hundred pounds *per annum*. While in the practice of the law, no fee could bribe him to defend a bad cause.

More was a man of genius, and of a mind enriched with all the learning of his time. He gave early proofs of superior talent. Before he was nineteen, he had acquired a critical knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages, was well versed in rhetoric, and other branches of elegant literature. He was not only intimately acquainted with the Greek and Roman classics; but it appears from his *Eutopia*, his most celebrated work, that he had imbibed the generous spirit of antiquity, and embraced sentiments which would be deemed free even in modern times. Unhappily, however, his fine genius and excellent understanding were disgraced by the grossest bigotry and superstition. The fact would appear incredible, were there not various other examples on record of the subjection of the most splendid talents to similar weaknesses. Though

a man of the gentlest manners, and of incorruptible integrity, his temper had been 'so irritated by polemics, originating in the events of the times, as to inspire him with the most extravagant attachment to the ancient superstition. It is said*, that when lord chancellor, he put on a surplice, and assisted the priest in saying mass in Chelsea-church. His aversion to heterodoxy was so implacable, that few inquisitors have surpassed him in their persecutions of heresy.

No man of his time had so extensive an influence over his cotemporaries. He held almost a continual correspondence with the chief *literati* of Europe. The celebrated Erasmus made a voyage to England, on purpose to enjoy the pleasure of his conversation. There is an amusing anecdote on record of the first *rencontre* of these two illustrious men. It was contrived, that at their first interview they should be unknown to each other. This interview took place at the lord mayor's table, at that period always open to men of learning and eminence. At dinner, a dispute arising on some theological points, Erasmus expressed

* Stow's London, Vol. II. p. 762.—Note by Strype.

himself with great severity of the clergy, and ridiculed with considerable acrimony, the doctrine of transubstantiation. This was a tender subject with sir Thomas, and he rejoined with the utmost poignancy of his wit. Erasmus, thus powerfully assailed, was urged to exclaim with some vehemence, "*Aut tu Morus es, aut nullus;*" to which More with great readiness, replied, "*Aut tu es Erasmus aut diabolus.*"

In this contest, sir Thomas's wit, if not his arguments, prevailed; but some time after, Erasmus had a similar, and a far greater advantage. More had lent Erasmus a horse, which he took over with him to Holland. Instead of returning it to the owner, he sent him the following epigram, intended as an answer to the *quondam* arguments of sir Thomas, on the subject of transubstantiation;

Quod mihi dixisti,
De corpore Christi,
 Crede quod edas, et edis;
Sic tibi rescribo,
De tuo palfrido;
 Crede quod habeas, et habes.

The high estimation in which both he and

his fellow-sufferer, bishop Fischer, were held by their countrymen, is further evinced by the following anecdote: When they were both confined in the Tower, for their refusal to swear to the supremacy, Rich, the solicitor-general, was sent to each in succession, to induce them, if possible, to abandon their scruples. They both persisted in denying the king's supremacy, and the illegality of his marriage with the queen Catherine; though they conceded so far as to agree to swear allegiance to the king, and to the succession. Archbishop Cranmer proposed accepting these concessions, without troubling them on the other points: "for (says he in his letter to Cromwell on this occasion,) if *they* once swear to the succession, it will quiet the kingdom: for they acknowledging it, all other persons will acquiesce and submit to their judgment." But the vindictive temper of the king never pardoned those who ventured to oppose his arbitrary will.

Another anecdote will serve to prove his uncommon ardour in literary pursuits, and the high value he in consequence set upon his time.—Sir Thomas was possessed of great conversational powers, blended with that de-

lightful flow of feeling which never fails to warm and attach the heart. Henry VIII. was delighted with his company, and often sent for him ; but these marks of royal favour, which, to an ordinary mind would have been the most flattering and valued tokens of regard, were not relished by More, who considered every moment thus spent as an encroachment upon his more important occupations. To get rid of the evil, therefore, he resorted to the singular expedient of appearing extremely dull in conversation for several successive times. The stratagem succeeded, and he was sent for no more. He thus sacrificed the reputation of a wit, to save his time.

Sir Thomas More is justly regarded as one of the chief revivers of classical literature in England. He both wrote and spoke Latin with almost the correctness and fluency of an ancient Roman; and with all his theological errors, he taught that erudition which civilized his country. He is scarcely less conspicuous as an improver of his native tongue. His language is more studied, more appropriate and correct—is more the phraseology of a man of learning and sense, than any specimen which preceded him. From his pro-

iciency in the Greek and Latin, he was enabled to transfuse into his vernacular dialect, many of the excellencies which characterise those admirable languages; and his style abounds with inversions and other peculiarities of classical diction. His English works were considered as standards of style as low down as the reign of James I.

LELAND.

JOHN LELAND, the father of English antiquaries, was born in London, and educated at St. Paul's school, under William Lilly, the celebrated grammarian. At the customary age he entered at Christ's College, Cambridge, of which he became a fellow. He subsequently removed to All-souls, Oxford. After a residence of several years in that college, during which he paid particular attention to Grecian literature, he visited Paris, perfected himself in the Latin and Greek by his intercourse with Budæus, Faber, Paulus Emilius, Ruellius, and Francis Sylvius; and before his return became acquainted with the French, Italian, and Spanish languages. To these he subsequently added the Welch and Saxon.

On his taking orders, Henry VIII. made him one of his chaplains, gave him the rectory of

Popeling, in the marches of Calais, appointed him his library-keeper, and conferred on him the title of his antiquary. He thus became the first, and he was also the last antiquary-royal, in England. In this character, his majesty, in 1533, granted him a commission under the great seal, to investigate the antiquities of England; and with this view, to search the libraries of all cathedrals, abbeys, priories, colleges, and other repositories of the records of antiquity. In this antiquarian research, he spent above six years, observing with particular care all the tumuli, coins, inscriptions, &c. which he met with, and directing his footsteps, with curious vigilance, to all the remains of Roman, Saxon, or Danish buildings; visiting likewise all the sea-coasts, as well as midland parts of the country.

Prior to Leland, all the literary monuments of antiquity, were totally disregarded, and students from Germany, apprised of this culpable indifference, were suffered to enter our libraries unmolested, and to cut out of the books deposited there, whatever passages they thought proper; which they afterwards published as relics of the ancient literature of their own.

country. The havoc thus made of the remains of our ancient learning, as well as by the subsequent dissolution of the monasteries, Leland beheld with regret; and he wrote to secretary Cromwell, to intreat his assistance in rescuing from the injuries of time, the writings of ancient authors. He then began a diligent search, and every literary relic he could find, he faithfully copied and registered, some of which he afterwards repositied in the king's library, retaining others in his own custody. For this meritorious toil, the king, in 1542, presented him with the valuable rectory of Hasely, in Oxfordshire; the year following preferred him to a canonry of King's College, now Christchurch, Oxford; and about the same time collated him to a prebend in the church of Sarum. He died on the 18th of April, 1552, after having been two years in a state of insanity.

The writings of Leland are numerous, consisting of poetical pieces in Latin, and even in Greek, as well as of antiquarian productions. My concern is only with the last. These I shall mention in the order in which they were composed, or rather printed.

1. *Assertio inclytissimi Arturii, Regis Britanniae. Elenchus Antiquorum Nominum*, Lond.

1543, 4to.—This work has been translated into English by R. Robinson, under the title “Ancient Order, Society, and Unity laudable of Prince Arthur and his Knightly Armory of the Round Table; with a Three-fold Assertion, 1582.”

2. “The Laborious Journey and Search of John Leland, for England’s Antiquities, given of him as a new year’s gift to king Henry VIII. in the 37th year of his reign.”

After a short account of his travels and collections, he informs his majesty, that he had digested into four books, an account of the illustrious writers of this realm, with their lives and monuments of learning.

Whereas it pleased your highness, upon very just considerations, to encourage me, by the authority of your most gracious commission, in the twenty-fifth year of your prosperous reign, to peruse and diligently to search all the libraries of monasteries and colleges of this your noble realm, to the intent that the monuments of ancient writers, as well of other, as of this your own province, might be brought out of deadly darkness to lively light, and to receive like thanks of the posterity, as they hoped for at such time as they employed their long and

great studies to the public wealth ; yea, and furthermore, that the holy scripture of God might both be sincerely taught and learned, all manner of superstition and craftily-coloured doctrine of a rout of the Roman bishops totally expelled out of this, your most catholic realm : I think it now no less than my very duty *brevely* to declare to your majesty, what fruit hath sprung of my laborious journey and costly enterprize, both rooted upon your infinite goodness and liberality—qualities right highly to be esteemed in all princes, and most especially in you, as naturally your own well known *proprieties* ¹.

First, I have conserved many good authors, the which otherwise had been like to have perished, to no small incommodity of good letters ; of the which, part remain in the most magnificent libraries of your royal palaces ; part also remain in my custody ; whereby I trust right shortly so to describe your most noble realm, and to publish the majesty of the excellent acts of your progenitors, (hitherto sore obscured both for lack of enprinting of such works as lay secretly in corners, and also because men of eloquence hath not enterprised to set them forth in a flourishing stile, in some times past not commonly used in England of writers otherwise well learned, and now in such estimation, that except truth be delicately clothed in *purple* ², her written verities can *scant* ³ find a reader ;)

¹ properties.

² purple.

³ scarcely.

that all the world shall evidently perceive that no particular region may justly be more extolled than yours: for true nobility and virtues at all points renowned. Farthermore, part of the exemplaries curiously sought by me, and fortunately found in sundry places of this your dominion, hath been enprinted in Germany, and now be in the presses chiefly of Frobenius; that not all only the Germans, but also the Italians themselves, (that count, as the Greeks did, full arrogantly, all other nations to be barbarous and unlettered, saving their own,) shall have a direct occasion openly of force to say, that *Britannia prima fuit parens altrix, (addo hoc etiam et juro quodam optimo) conservatrix cum civorum magnorum, tum maxime ingeniorum.*

Of the writers of England, &c. he says:—

The first book, beginning at the Druids, is deducted on the time of the coming of St. Augustine into England. The second is from the time of Augustine on to the advent of the Normans. The third from the Normans to the end of the most honorable reign of the mighty, famous, and prudent prince Henry VII. your father. The fourth beginneth with the name of your majesty, whose glory in learning is to the world so clearly known, that tho' among the lives of other learned, I have accu-

rately celebrated the names of Bladudus, Molmutius, Constantinus Magnus, Sigebertus, Alfridus, Alfridus Magnus, Æthelstanus, and Henry I. kings and your progenitors; and also Æthelward, second son to Alfred the Great; Hunfrid, duke of Gloucester; and Tipetote, earl of Worcester; yet conferred with your grace, they seem as small lights, (if I may freely say my judgment, your high [modesty not offended,) in respect of the day-star.

* * * * *

Wherefore, after that I had *perpended*¹ the honest and profitable studies of these historiographs, I was totally enflamed with a love to see thoroughly all those parts of this your opulent and ample realm, that I had read of in the aforesaid writers; inso-much that all my other occupations intermitted, I have so travelled in your dominions, both by the sea-coasts and the middle parts, sparing *nother* labour nor costs, by the space of these six years past; that there is almost *nother* cape nor bay, haven, creek or pier, river, or confluence of rivers, breaches, washes, lakes, meres, fenny waters, mountains, valleys, moors, heaths, forests, chaces, woods, cities, burghs, castles, principal manor places, monasteries, and colleges, but I have seen them; and noted in so doing, a whole world of things very memorable.

* * * * *

Yea, and to wade farther in this matter, whereas

¹ weighed.

now almost no man can well guess at the shadow of the ancient names of havens, rivers, promontories, hills, woods, cities, towns, castles, and variety of kindreds of people, that Cæsar, Livy, Strabo, Diodorus, Fabius Pictor, Pomponius Mela, Plinius, Cornelius Tacitus, Ptolemæus, Sextus Rufus, Ammianus Marcellinus, Solinus, Antoninus, and divers other make mention of, I trust so to open this window, that the light shall be seen so long, that is to say, by the space of a whole thousand years stopped up, and the whole glory of your renowned Britain to re flourish through the world.

This done, I have matter at plenty already prepared to this purpose, that is to say, to write an history, to the which I intend to adscribe this title, *De Antiquitate Britannicâ*; or else, *Civilis Historia*. And this work I intend to divide into so many books as there be shires in England, and shires and great dominions in Wales. So that I esteem that this volume will include a fifty books, whereof each one severally shall contain the beginnings, encreases, and memorable acts of the chief towns and castles of the province allotted to it.

Then I intend to distribute into six books, such matter as I have already collected concerning the isles adjacent to your noble realm, and under your subjection. Whereof there shall be of these isles, *Vecta*, *Mona*, and *Mevania*, sometime kingdoms.

And to superadd a work as an ornament, and a right comely garland to the enterprizes aforesaid, I have selected stuff to be distributed into three books, the which I purpose thus to entitle, *De Nobilitate Britannicâ*. Whereof the first shall declare the names of kings, queens, with their children; dukes, earls, lords, captains, and rulers in this realm, to the coming of the Saxons; and their conquest. The second shall be of the Saxons and Danes, to the victory of king William the Great. The third from the Normans, to the reign of your most noble grace, descending lineally of the Briton, Saxon, and Norman kings. So that all noblemen shall clearly perceive their lineal parentele,

The "New Year's Gift," Lond. 1549, was edited by John Bale, with notes; who also added of his own, "A Register of the Names of English Writers," whom the second part of his work, *De Scriptoribus Britannicâ*, shall comprehend. It has been also reprinted by Hearne, in the first volume of the "Itinerary" of our author.

3. *Commentarii de Scriptoribus Britannicis, Auctore Joanne Lelando Londinate*, Oxon. 1709, 2 vols. 8vo.; commonly bound in one. This

was edited by Mr. Anthony Hall, and forms the fourth volume of the author's "Collections," and contains the lives and characters of most of the eminent writers of England. A great part of this work has been transcribed by Bale, in his *Scriptorum Britanniae Catalogus*; and is often referred to by Pits, after Bale.

It should be observed, that Leland, as likewise Bale and Pits, give an account of many learned Britons who flourished long before, and about the time of the Roman invasion; but these, for the most part, from internal evidence alone, we may pronounce to be legendary. There is a story of one Perdix, or Partridge, a British prophet, who, according to these writers, flourished in the year 760 before Christ, and was cotemporary with Isaiah. The story is mentioned at some length by Henry.

4. "The Itinerary of John Leland, the antiquary," was published by the industrious Hearne, Oxford, 1710, in 9 volumes, 8vo.; of which a second edition was printed in 1745, with improvements and additions, the MS. having been re-examined with great care, many parts supplied and amended, and many passages transferred to their proper places.

Leland, in his description of the kingdom, has restored the ancient names of places in Britain. The antiquities and civil history of the nation, are comprised in fifty books, corresponding with the then number of shires in England and Wales. The survey of the British Isles, is contained in six books; and finally, an account of the nobility of Britain in three; agreeably to his own account above extracted.

5. *Johanni Lelandi Antiquarii de Rebus Britannicus Collectanea. Ex Autographis Descripsit ediditque Tho. Hearne, A. M. Oxoniensis, qui et appendicem subjecit, totumque opus, (in 6 volumina distributum,) notis et indice donavit, Oxon. 1715, 8vo.*

6. *Codrus, sive Laus et Defensio Gallofridi Arturii Monumetensis, contra Polydorum Virgilium.* A defence of Geoffrey of Monmouth, against Polydore Virgil. Printed in the sixth volume of the "*Collectanea*."

A few other pieces of Leland in MS. are repositied in the Cottonian and other libraries. Various others are likewise ascribed to him by Bale and Pits, which had probably never any existence.—The works of Leland furnish a fountain whence all succeeding antiqua-

ries have largely drawn. Among these may be particularly enumerated Bale, in his Catalogue of English Writers ; Camden, in his Britannia ; Burton, in his Description of Leicestershire ; and sir W. Dugdale, in his Antiquities of Warwickshire.

Leland, in addition to his eminence as an antiquarian, is said to have been a master in poetry and oratory ; but this encomium is conferred by Bale, a brother antiquarian, who moreover affirms, (probably with more truth,) “ that England never saw, and he believed, never would see, a man to him in all things to be compared, (in respect of antiquities,) for undoubtedly he was in these matters, wonderful and peerless, so that as concerning them, England had yet never a greater loss.”

HARDING.

JOHN HARDING, *armiger*, was nobly descended, and born somewhere in the north of England; though the particular time of his birth is not specified by Bale, who is my authority for these few particulars. He first served, in his military capacity, under Robert Umfreville; then under the duke of York, afterwards Edward IV. of England. The precise time of his death seems to be also unknown; but he was living, an 'old man, about the beginning of Edward's reign, or in 1461.

He was author of a metrical history of England, from its fabulous origin to the commencement of the reign of that prince, to whom it was dedicated. His narrative is very succinct to the time of Henry IV. but afterwards becomes more copious. The work was

printed by Grafton, in 1543, with a continuation in prose, (whether by himself does not appear,) to the close of the reign of Henry VII. with the following title: "The Chronicle of John Harding, from the first beginning of England, unto the reign of king Edward IV. where he made an end of his Chronicle; and from that time is added a continuation of the story in prose, to this our time. Now first imprinted, gathered out of divers and sundry authors that have written of the affairs of England. *Mense Januarii.*"

This Chronicle should perhaps have been arranged in Edward IV.'s reign, in which it seems at least to have been finished, and particularly as I have selected a short extract from the metrical, rather than the prose narrative. But there, it would have somewhat interfered with the books printed by Caxton, and the prose continuation belongs decidedly to this reign.

The following brief specimen of this historical versifier, has some antiquarian curiosity, as many readers will be able to connect it with local associations:

Chap. 41.

Lud, king of Britain, builded from London Stone to Ludgate, and called that part Lud's Town ; and after, by process, was called London, by turning of tongues.

This son and heir was Lud of much might,
Then crowned by all baronage ;
His cities all eke his heritage, castles wight
He did repair that were his heritage.
And where was worthy his service and homage
To him was done, in lands all about
Was none withstood, so was he dread and dout.

With walls fair, and towers fresh about,
His city great of Troynovant full fair,
Full well he made and battelled throughout,
And palace fair for royals to appear ;
Amending other defective and unfair,
From London Stone to his palace royal,
That now Ludgate is knowen over all.

Between London Stone and Ludgate forthright,
That called was then for his name Ludstone,
He made men build, that London so then hight.
His palace fair, then made he there anon,
With towers high, both of lime and stone,
Beside Ludgate; and his temple near thereby,
His God to serve, and him to glorify.

When he had reigned by forty year all out,
He died so, and in his temple fair
Entombed was, with stories all about.
Androgens was then his son and heir,
Passing of sight and July fair;
Tenancius, his younger son of age,
Which were too young to rule the heritage.

Cassibalayn, their uncle, then was king,
And found his nephews full honestly and well,
And nurtured them while they were children *ying*;
And at their age when they could reason feel,
He them avanced right worshipfully and well.
Androge he made and created duke of Kent,
Of Troynovant also by whole entent.

The immediate predecessor of Lud, was Hely, who

The isle of Hely made ;
His palace gay that might right well suffice,
He builded there, that was both long and *brade*,
Wherein he dwelled much and most abide.

The continuation commences, (as before observed,) with the reign of Edward IV. and terminates with that of Henry VII. though there are two pages with the title of "Reign of Henry VIII." which speak generally of the principal acts of that prince; and particularly of his "dissolving and suppressing all counterfeit sects and false religions;" so that the continuation must have been written late in this reign.

Harding had an inveterate enmity to the Scots, against whom he had carried arms in several expeditions. He was anxious to prove their ancient vassalage to the crown of England, and with this view ransacked all the old Chronicles he could meet with. Not content with this, hearing of the existence of an ancient record in Scotland, which placed the mat-

ter beyond dispute, he undertook a perilous journey thither in disguise, and after much difficulty, bore it off in triumph ; exhibiting it successively to Henry V. and VI. and lastly to Edward IV.

HALL.

EDWARD HALL was born in London, (in what year is not recorded,) and educated at Eton school; whence he was removed to King's College, Cambridge, and subsequently entered as student at Gray's Inn. Fuller says that he became *common sergeant* (by which he probably means recorder,) of London; for his exemplary conduct in which office, he was afterwards advanced to be one of the judges in the Sheriff's Court. He died at a very advanced age in 1547.

Hall compiled a Chronicle of the wars between the two Roses, entitled—"The Union of the two noble and *illustre* families of Lancaster and York, being long in continual dis-sension for the crown of this noble realm, with all the acts done in both the times of the princes, both of the one lineage and of the

other ; beginning at the time of king Henry IV. the first author of this divison, and so successively proceeding, to the reign of the high and prudent prince, king Henry VIII. the indubitate flower, and very heir of both the said lineages : whereunto is added to every king a several table." The work is dedicated to Henry VIII. and was printed by Grafton in 1548 ; also in 1550.

The following is a list of his authorities.

LATIN AUTHORS.

1. *Polychronicon*. 2. *Cronica Cronicarum*. 3. *Naclerus*. 4. *Polydorus*. 5. *Paulus Æmilius*. 6. *Voluteranus*. 7. *Gauguinus*. 8. *Albertus Krantz*. 9. *Michael Ricius*. 10. *Hector Boetius*. 11. *Johannes Major*. 12. *Abbas Wyssenbergensis*. 13. *Carion*. 14. *Supplimentum Cronicarum*. 15. *Gesta Tholosanorum*. 16. *Cronica Brabancie*.

FRENCH AUTHORS.

1. *Enquerant de Munstrellet*. 2. *Jean Buchet*. 3. *Jean Mayer de Belget*. 4. *Argenton*. 5. *Le Mere des Histories*. 6. *Les Annales de*

France. 7. *Les Annales de Aquitayne.* 8. *Les Croniqz de Britayne.* 9. *Giles Corozett.* 10. *Les Croniques de Normandi.* 11. *Le Rosarie.* 12. *Le Genologie des Roys.*

ENGLISH WRITERS.

1. *Trevisa.* 2. *Fabian.* 3. *Sir Thomas More.* 4. *Caxton.* 5. *John Harding,* 6. *The Chronicles of London.* 7. *John Basset.* 8. *Balantyne;* and “divers other pamphlets, the names of whom are to most men unknowen.”

In an advertisement to the reader, Grafton informs us that Hall carried his history no farther than the 24th year of Henry VIII. “The rest, (says he,) he left noted in divers and many pamphlets and papers, which so diligently and truly as I could, I gathered the same together, and have in such wise compiled them, as may after the said years appear in this work; but utterly without any addition of mine.”

“The names¹ of the histories contained in this volume.”

1. An introduction into the division of the two houses of Lancaster and York. 2. The unquiet time of king Henry IV. 3. The victorious acts of king Henry V. 4. The troublous season of Henry VI. 5. The prosperous reign

of king Edward IV. 6. The pitiful life of king Edward V. 7. The tragical doings of king Richard III. 8. The politic governance of king Henry VII. 9. The triumphant reign of king Henry VIII.

The passage which follows, presents the reader with a specimen of the youthful diversions of Henry :—

On May Day then next following, in the second year of his reign, his grace being young, and willing not to be idle, rose in the morning very early to fetch may, or green boughs, himself fresh and richly apparelled ; and clothed all his knights, squires, and gentlemen in white satin ; and all his guard and yeomen of the crown in white sarsenet ; and so went every man with his bow and arrows shooting to the wood ; and so repaired again to the court, every man with a green bough in his cap ; and at his returning, many hearing of his going a-maying, were desirous to see him shoot : for at that time his grace shot as strong, and as great a length, as any of his guard. There came to his grace a certain man with bow and arrows, and desired his grace to take the master of him, and to see him shoot : for at that time his grace was contented. The man put his one foot in his bosom, and so did shoot, and shot a very good

shot, and well towards his mark; whereof not only his grace, but all other greatly marvelled. So the king gave him a reward for his so doing, which person afterwards, of the people and of them in the court, was called Foot-in-bosom.

The same year, in the feast of Pentecost, holden at Greenwich, that is to say, the Thursday in the same week, his grace, with two other with him, challenged all comers to fight with them at the barriers, with target and casting of the spear of eight foot; and that done, his grace, with the said two aids, to fight every of them with two-handed swords, with and against all comers, (none except being a gentleman,) where the king behaved himself so well, and delivered himself so valiantly, by his hardy prowess and great strength, that the praise and laud was given to his grace, and his aids; notwithstanding that divers valiant and strong persons had assailed him and his aids.

From thence the whole court removed to Windsor, then beginning his progress, exercising himself daily in shooting, singing, dancing, wrestling, casting of the bar, playing at the recorders, flute, virginals, and in setting of songs, making of *balettes*; and did set two goodly masses, every of them five parts, which were sung oftentimes in his chapel, and afterwards in divers other places. And when he came to Oaking, there were kept both justs and tourneys.

The rest of his progress was spent in hunting, hawking, and shooting.

* * * * *

The said progress finished, his grace, the queen, with all their whole train, in the month of October following, removed to Greenwich. The king not minded to see young gentlemen unexpert in martial feats, caused a place to be prepared, within the park of Greenwich, for the queen and the ladies to stand and see the fight with battle axes, that should be done there; where the king himself, armed, fought with one Gyot, a gentleman of Almayne, a tall man, and a good man of arms. And then after they had done, they marched always two and two together, and so did their feats and enterprises every man very well. Albeit, it happened the Gyot to fight with sir Edward Howard, which Gyot was by him stricken to the ground.

The morrow after this enterprise done, the king, with the queen, came to the Tower of London. And to the entent that there should be no displeasure nor malice be borne by any of those gentlemen which fought with the axe against other, the king gave unto them a certain sum in gold, valued at 200 mark, to make a banquet among themselves withal. The which banquet was made at the Fishmongers-hall, in Thames-street, where they all met to the number of twenty-four, all apparelled in one suit or livery,

after Almayne fashion, that is to say, their utter garments all of yellow satin, yellow hosen, yellow shoes, girdles, scabbards, and bonnets, with yellow feathers; their garments and hosen all cut and lined with white satin, and their scabbards wound about with satin. After their banquet ended, they went by torch-light to the Tower, presenting themselves before the king, who took pleasure to behold them.

From thence, the 8th day of November, his grace removed to Richmond, and willed to be declared to all noblemen and gentlemen, that his grace, with two aids, that is to wit, master Charles Brandon, and master Compton, during two days, would answer all comers with spear at the tilt one day, and at tourney with swords, the other.

And to accomplish this enterprise, the 13th day of November, his grace, armed at all pieces, with his two aids, entered the field; their bases and trappers were of cloth of gold, set with red roses, *ingreyled* with gold of *brawdery*. The counterpart came in freshly, apparelled every man after his devise. At these justs, the king brake more staves than any other, and therefore had the price. At the tourney in likewise, the honour was his. The second night were divers strangers of Maximilian, the emperor's court, and ambassadors of Spain, with the king at supper. When they had supped, the king

willed them to go into the queen's chamber, who so did. And in the mean season, the king, with fifteen other, apparelled in Almayne jackets of *Ermosyne*, and purple satin, with long quartered sleeves, with hosen of the same suit; their bonnets of white velvet, wrapped in flat gold of damask, with visors and white plumes; came in with a mummary; and after a certain time that they had played with the queen and the strangers, they departed. Then suddenly entered six minstrels, richly apparelled, playing on their instruments; and then followed fourteen persons, gentlemen, all apparelled in yellow satin, cut like Almaynes, bearing torches. After them came six disguised in white satin and green, *embroudered* and set with letters and castles of fine gold, in bullion. The garments were of strange fashion, with also strange cuts, every cut knit with points of fine gold, and tassels of the same; their hosen cut and tied in likewise; their bonnets of cloth of silver, wound with gold. First of these six was the king, the earl of Essex, Charles Brandon, sir Edward Howard, sir Thomas Knevet, and sir Henry Guilford. Then part of the gentlemen bearing torches departed, and shortly returned; after whom came in six ladies, apparelled in garments of *Ermosyne*, satin, *embroudered*, and traversed with cloth of gold, cut in pomegranets and yokes, stringed after the fashion of Spain. Then the said six men danced, with these

six ladies; and after that they had danced a season, the ladies took off the men's visors, whereby they were known: whereof the queen and the strangers much praised the king, and ended the pastime.

This will suffice for a specimen of the sort of matter frequently to be found in this author.

Hall's Chronicle is one of the principal authorities for that dark period of our history, comprehending the wars between the Houses of York and Lancaster. But his narrative, (like those of his predecessor Fabian, and of his successors, Grafton and Holinshed,) is dull and tedious, often puerile. Nicholson says of him—"If the reader desires to know what sort of clothes were worn in each king's reign, and how the fashions altered, this is an historian to his purpose." It may be remarked, however, that all the ancient chroniclers derive no small portion of their value to a modern reader, from this minuteness of description relative to objects which would be disregarded by modern historians, as degrading the dignity of history: for it is by means of such descriptions chiefly, that we are enabled to trace the

progress of manners, and to comprehend the state of society in any given period. In this view, we find some compensation for their dullness and want of judgment.

TYNDALE, COVERDALE, ROGERS.*Versions of the Bible.*

TYNDALE.

THIS celebrated reformer was born on the borders of Wales, about the year 1500. At the usual age, he entered at Magdalene College, Oxford, where he early imbibed the tenets of Luther, and engaged with great zeal in their propagation. He subsequently removed to Cambridge, which he quitted to become an inmate in the house of sir ——. Welch, in Gloucestershire, in quality of tutor to his children. Here he displayed such zeal for Luther, and such enmity to the pope, that he was compelled to quit his place of residence.

While he remained here, however, he trans-

lated into English, "Erasmus's Manual of a Christian Soldier," with the view (as he says himself,) of curing the vulgar error of men's placing religion in ceremonies, and more than Jewish observations of corporal things," &c. As the history of this distinguished reformer now becomes interwoven with the brief historical narrative I am about to give of the translations of the Bible, I shall say nothing more of him in this place.

Versions of the Bible.

About twenty-four years after the death of Wicliffe, archbishop Arundel, in a convocation of the clergy of his province assembled at Oxford, published a constitution, by which it was decreed, "that no one should thereafter translate any text of Holy Scripture into English, by way of a book, a little book, or tract; and that no book, &c. of this kind should be read that was composed lately in the time of John Wicliffe, or since his death."

The Latin Bible, or Vulgate, was first printed in 1462, and by several succeeding edi-

tions, soon became common. The Old Testament, in Hebrew, was first printed in 1488; and the New Testament at Basil, in its original Greek, about thirty years after. When these sacred oracles were brought into England, with the introduction of printing, the illiterate and terrified monks declaimed from their pulpits, that there was now a new language discovered, called *Greek*, of which people should beware, since it was that which produced all the heresies; that in this language was come forth a book called the *New Testament*, which was now in every body's hands, and was full of thorns and briars; that there was also another language now started up, which they called *Hebrew*, and that they who learned it were turned Hebrews.

About this time, the vicar of Croydon, in Surry, in a sermon preached at Paul's Cross, is said to have declared, with prophetic wisdom, "We must root out printing, or printing will root out us."

Notwithstanding, however, the clamours of the monks, and persecutions of the secular clergy, William Tyndale, in the reign of Henry VIII. undertook to translate the Scriptures from the original Hebrew and Greek, into

English ; though he was convinced, from the circumstances of the times, that the undertaking would be accomplished at the hazard of his life. That he might prosecute his design in greater security, he made an attempt, through the interest of sir Henry Guildford, master of horse to the king, and a warm patron of learned men, to be admitted into the family of Tonsal, lately promoted to the see of London. But his application proving unsuccessful, and still contemplating his favourite object with ardent enthusiasm, he resolved to go abroad. To accomplish which purpose, he was allowed an annuity of ten pounds a year by Humfrey Monmouth, a wealthy citizen, and a favourer of the reformation ; and at Antwerp, in Flanders, he prosecuted his design with great assiduity. John Fry and William Roye, who acted as amanuenses for him, also assisted him in collating texts ; and the New Testament was finished in 1526, of which one thousand five hundred copies were printed, but without a name. This edition, by Tyn-
dale's own acknowledgment, had considerable errors ; but it sold so rapidly, that the following year another edition was published by the Dutch printers, and the year after, another,

each consisting of five thousand copies. Great numbers of these were imported into England, and the whole speedily sold. The importers, however, were prosecuted with great, though often ludicrous severity. To give an instance—John Tyndale, the translator's brother, and Thomas Patmore, merchants, were condemned to do penance, by riding with their faces to their horses' tails, with the books fastened thick about them, pinned or tacked to their gowns or cloaks, to the standard in *Cheap*, and there, with their own hands, to fling them into the fire kindled on purpose to burn them.

But the zeal of the reformers surmounted every obstacle, and the New Testament of this translation, continued to be imported and read; a fact which is proved from the sale of the three editions before mentioned, before the year 1530, when a third Dutch edition was printed.

Meanwhile Tyndale was diligently occupied in translating from the Hebrew the five books of Moses; and having finished his translation, he was shipwrecked on his voyage to *Hamburgh*, (undertaken in order to print it,) the manuscript lost, and he was obliged to begin all anew. From this accident, the Old Testament

did not appear in an English dress till the year 1530. In this year too, being now at leisure, Tyndale published his, "Answer unto sir Thomas More's Dialogue."

In 1534, a fourth Dutch edition of Tyndale's New Testament was printed, in 12mo, a copy of which is in lord Pembroke's library; and about three months after was published, his second edition of the New Testament, in the whole, the sixth, carefully corrected. Before this edition was quite printed, Tyndale was betrayed; and being apprehended by the officers of the emperor, was confined a close prisoner in the castle of Tilford, about eighteen miles from Antwerp, where he remained during a year and half. The English merchants exerted themselves to their utmost to release him; and letters from lord Cromwell and others, were dispatched from England to countenance and assist their endeavours; but by the activity of Philips, the agent of the catholics for that purpose, he was hurried to a trial, condemned, and publicly executed in 1536, being first strangled, and then burnt to ashes.

Several other editions of his corrected copy of the New Testament, were given to the public in the year of his martyrdom.



COVERDALE.

The next translator of the Scriptures was Miles Coverdale, a native of Yorkshire, who was subsequently professed of the house of Austin Friars, in Cambridge, of which Dr. Barnes, who was burnt for heresy, was prior. Having incurred danger by embracing the same heretical opinions, he fled his country, and employed himself with zealous diligence in the study and translation of the Scriptures. Accordingly, in the year 1535, a translation of the whole Bible appeared, dedicated to the king. In this dedication he tells his majesty, that "The blind bishop of Rome no more knew what he did when he gave him this title, 'Defender of the Faith,' than the Jewish bishop Caiaphas, when he prophesied that it was better to put Christ to death, than that all the people should perish; that the pope gave him

this title, only because his highness suffered him to burn God's word, the root of faith, and to persecute the lovers and ministers of it; whereas in very deed he prophesied, that by the righteous administration of his grace, the faith should be so defended, that God's word, the mother of faith, should have its free course *thorow* all Christiendom, but especially in his grace's realm; that his grace, in very deed, should defend the faith, yea even the true faith of Christ; no dreams, no fables, no heresy, no papistical inventions; but the uncorrupt faith of God's most holy word, which, to set forth, his highness, with his most honourable council, applied all study and endeavour."

In executing his version, Coverdale informs us, that he made use of five different interpreters, who had translated the Scriptures not only into Latin, but also into Dutch. He styles it a "Special Translation," to distinguish it from the translations which preceded it. This will be most apparent by the comparison of a passage of this with the version of Tyn-dale.

*Tyndale.**Gen. 29.*

When the Lord saw that Lea was despised, he made her fruitful, but Rahel barren. And Lea conceived and bare a son, and called his name Ruben : for she said, the Lord hath looked upon my tribulation. And now my husband will love me.

Coverdale.

But when the Lord saw that Lea was nothing regarded, he made her fruitful, and Rachel barren. And Lea conceived and bare a son, whom she called Ruben, and said, the Lord hath looked upon mine adversity. Now will my husband love me.

There was another edition of this Bible, 4to. in 1550, republished with a new title in 1553, which are supposed by Lewis to be the only editions of this version.

The clergy affected not to approve this version of Tyndale and Coverdale; and accordingly, in a convocation of the province of Canterbury, held June 9th, 1536, they agreed upon a form of petition to the king, that he

would graciously indulge unto his subjects of the laity, the reading of the Bible in the English tongue, and that a *new* translation of it might be forthwith made for that end and purpose. Still there is reason to conclude that it was licensed by the king: for soon after it was finished, were published by lord Cromwell, keeper of the privy seal, and vicegerent to the king, for and concerning all his jurisdiction ecclesiastical within his realm, "injunctions to the clergy, by the authority of the king's highness," of which the seventh orders—

"That every person or proprietary of any parish church within this realm, shall on this side the feast of St. Peter, *ad vincula*, Aug. 1, next coming, provide a book of the whole Bible, both in Latin, and also in English, and lay the same in the quire, for every man that will to look and read thereon: and shall discourage no man from the reading any part of the Bible, either in Latin or English, but rather comfort, exhort, and admonish every man to read the same as the very word of God, and the spiritual food of man's soul, whereby they may the better know their duties to God, to their sovereign lord the king, and their neighbour; ever gently and charitably

exhorting them, that using a sober and modest behaviour in the reading and inquisition of the true sense of the same, they do in no wise stiffly or eagerly contend or strive one with another about the same, but refer the declaration of those places that be in controversy, to the judgment of them that be better learned."

In 1537, appeared another edition of the English Bible, in folio, with the following title :—

Matthew's Bible.

The Bible, which is all the Holy Scripture, in which are contained the Old and New Testament, truly and purely translated into English, by Thomas Matthew. This edition is to be found in the earl of Pembroke's library, and is said to have been a second edition of Coverdale's Bible, prepared by John Rogers. It was printed somewhere abroad by Grafton, perhaps at Marsburgh, in Hussia; or at Paris; since Francis I. granted a license to him and Edward Whitchurch, to print the English Bible in that city. Of this edition Grafton presented six copies to archbishop Cranmer, and the lord Cromwell. It has been observed of this Bible, by Mr. Wanley, that "to the end of the book

of Chronicles, it is Tyndale's translation ; and from thence to the end of the Ap'ocrypha, Coverdale's ; and that the whole New Testament is Tyndale's." Lewis remarks, that the prophecy of Jonas is also Tyndale's ; since his prologue is prefixed, and since it is precisely the same as that in Coverdale's Bible. This Bible also obtained the royal license through the instrumentality of Cranmer, then archbishop of Canterbury. As this translation was made by several different hands, the title of Matthew seems to be fictitious. The following is a specimen of this version :—

And it came to pass, when men began to multiply upon the earth, and had begot them daughters, the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and took unto them wives which they best liked among them all. And the Lord said, My spirit shall not alway strive with man : for they are flesh. Nevertheless, I will give them yet space.

There were tyrants in the world in those days : for, after that the children of God had gone in unto the daughters of men, and had begotten them children, the same children were the mightiest of the world, and men of renown. And when the Lord saw the wickedness of man was increased upon the earth, and that all the imagination and thoughts of

his heart was only evil continually, he repented that he had made man upon the earth, and sorrowed in his heart. And said, I will destroy mankind which I have made, from off the face of the earth, both man, beast, worm, and fowl of the air : for it repenteth me that I have made them.—(*Genesis, chap. 6.*)

From this specimen it will be seen, how comparatively little alteration has been made in the version now in common use.

In the year 1538, was printed the New Testament, in 4to. in Latin and English, “each correspondent to the other after the vulgar text commonly called St. Jerome’s, faithfully translated by Johan Hollybushe.” This, however, is Coverdale’s New Testament, which he permitted Hollybushe to print. The next year another edition of it was printed, and dedicated to lord Cromwell. The former edition is in St. Paul’s library.

In 1539, was printed—

Cranmer’s, or The Great Bible,

In a large folio, with the following title:
The Bible in English ; that is to say, the con-

tent of all the Holy Scripture, both of the Old and New Testament, truly translated after the verity of the Hebrew and Greek texts, by the diligent study of divers excellent learned men, expert in the foresaid tongues. In this edition, Matthew's Bible was revised, and various alterations and corrections made. The additions to the Hebrew and Greek originals in the Latin Vulgate, were translated, and inserted in a smaller letter than the text. A second edition of this Bible was printed either the same, or the next year, by Edward Whitchurch; and also another by Richard Taverner, "newly recognised with great diligence, after most faithful exemplars."

The same year, 1540, was printed another edition of the English Bible in folio, by Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, with a prologue. This is the Bible which was then appointed to the use of the churches. In May of the same year was issued a royal proclamation, by which the curates and parishioners of every parish were required, under the penalty of 40s. a month while not in possession of it, to provide themselves with a copy of the largest size of this Bible, before All Saint's Day next ensuing. The price was also set by royal authority, viz.

ten shillings unbound, and not exceeding twelve shillings well bound and clasped.

In consonance with this proclamation, Bonner, bishop of London, set up six Bibles in different places of his cathedral, with an admonition attached to the pillars, to the following effect:—"That whosoever came thither to read, should prepare himself to be edified and made the better thereby; that he should join therein to his readiness to obey the king's injunctions made in that behalf; that he bring with him discretion, honest intent, charity, reverence, and quiet behaviour; that there should no such number meet together as to make a multitude; that no exposition be made thereupon, but what is declared in the book itself; and that it be not read with noise in time of divine service, nor that any disputation or contention be used at it." The priests or ministers, it seems, were not yet required to read it to the people.

The same year, 1540, another edition was printed at London, by Thomas Petyt and Robert Redman, for Thomas Berthelet, "printer unto the king's grace." A beautiful copy of this edition, printed on vellum, and finely illuminated, is in the king's library.

On the 6th of May, 1541, the king issued a decree, that the great volume of the Bible should be set up in every parish church in England; by which all the curates and parishioners throughout the kingdom, not already furnished with Bibles, were commanded to procure them before Allhallows next ensuing, and to cause them to be placed conveniently in their respective churches; and all the bishops and ordinaries were strictly required to take especial care to see the said commands put in execution.

Still the execution of these decrees was retarded by the clergy with a malicious perverseness. It appears from a small tract entitled "The Supplication of the Commons," that the Bibles in the parish churches, which should have been left free of access to every one, were industriously conveyed into the choir, or into some pew, where the vulgar presumed not to enter; that a considerable number of churches had no Bible at all; that the clergy, not satisfied with thus depriving the poor of spiritual food, did not rest till they had obtained an order from the king, that no person, of whatever rank, should be allowed to read the Scriptures in the time of divine service; and that afterwards,

when a proclamation was issued for the burning of certain translations of the *New Testament*, they were so audacious as to burn the whole Bible, because it was translated by *heretics*; lastly, that they intreated his majesty to call in the Bible again, on the insidious plea, "that it was not faithfully translated in all parts," promising, that themselves would superintend a new translation, which was to be published again within seven years.

From this representation, the king finally appointed two bishops, Tonsal, bishop of Durham, and Heath, bishop of Rochester, to superintend the translation of the Bible; who declared, "they had done his highness's commandment therein," and actually set their names to it, though they afterwards denied they had any concern in it, and caused the printer to erase their names; reporting to the world, that Thomas Cromwell, late earl of Essex, "was the chief doer, or the principal actor in authorising the English Bible, and not the king, but as led by him;" and therefore, that the Bible "was of a traitor's setting forth, and not of the king's."

The king being resolved that the Scriptures should continue to be read in the vulgar

tongue, the clergy durst not oppose his will directly; but by a subtlety of proceeding truly catholic, they succeeded in undermining his resolution. The translation of Tyndale and Coverdale, was charged by them with numberless errors, both philological as well as heretical; they represented to his majesty, that the permission of the free and general use of the Scriptures, served only to excite controversy, and augment faction; that as a proof of this, the people, instead of being edified by what they read, did nothing but dispute in taverns and alehouses, branding one another reciprocally with the names of papist and heretic; that others read so loud in the churches, as to disturb the congregation; and that thus the peace of his kingdom was destroyed by the continuance of this new privilege.

A revision of the translation of the New Testament, was now projected by the archbishop, in convocation, and a particular portion assigned to a certain number of bishops respectively; but this revision was never accomplished, nor designed to be accomplished. The clergy wanted only to gain time, that they might be able to supersede all translations, and reduce the people to their former state of dark-

ness and degradation. They amused themselves therefore with idle disputes about the propriety of translating certain Latin words—such as *ecclesia*, *mysterium*, &c. of which Gardiner produced a catalogue of 99, which he seemed to think too sacred for prophane understandings. Thus a translation, conducted according to this method of exclusion, would have been useless when made. This idea was suggested to the king by Cranmer, who was permitted to communicate to the convocation his majesty's pleasure, that the proposed revision should be declined, and the matter referred to the two universities.

But notwithstanding this prohibition, in the parliament which met 22d January, this year, 1543, the popish faction prevailed, and caused an act to be passed, condemning Tyndale's translation as crafty, false, and untrue, and enacting, that "All manner of books of the Old and New Testament in English, of this translation, should be, by authority of this act, clearly and utterly abolished, extinguished, and forbidden to be kept and used in this realm, or elsewhere, in any of the king's dominions."—The prohibition, however, did not extend to translations which were not Tyn-

dale's, though it was expressly enjoined that all annotations or preambles should be obliterated in all Bibles, under penalty of forfeiting 40s. for each Bible thus glossed.

On the passing of this act, the following remark was found made in a spare leaf of an English abridgment of Polydore Virgil's book "Of the Invention of Arts," by a poor shepherd, and which he bought about this time, 1546: "When I kepe Mr. Letymer's shype, I bout thys boke, when the Testament was oberagatyd, that shepeherdys might not rede hit; I prey God amende that blyndnes. Wryt by Robert Wyllyams, keppying shepe upon Seynbury Hill, 1546."

The king, being continually disquieted by complaints from the clergy, of the ill use the people made of their privilege to read the Scriptures, issued, in the last year of his reign, a proclamation, prohibiting Coverdale's, as well as Tyndale's version, as likewise the use of any other than what was allowed by parliament. This act was repealed at the commencement of the following reign.

It is a common opinion, that the Old and New Testament were translated by Tyndale and Coverdale; and the Apocrypha by John

Rogers. But the Apocrypha in Matthew's Bible, as before observed, is precisely the same version as that in Coverdale's ; and Coverdale always speaks of the translation as his own, and never gives the slightest intimation of his having had any assistant.

JOHN ROGERS.

This reformer was educated at Cambridge, where he took the degree of bachelor of arts in 1525. The same year he was chosen junior canon of Cardinal's College, now Christchurch, Oxford. On his taking orders, he was appointed chaplain to the English factory at Antwerp, where he became acquainted with Tyndale, by whom he was convinced of the errors of popery. After his conversion, he married, and removed to Wittenberg, in Germany, where he became pastor of a congregation, and, as some affirm, a superintendant. It seems, that after Tyndale's death, when a new edition of his Bible was projected, with his prologues and notes, and which was finished in 1537, Rogers was applied to, to revise

and prepare it for the press; and that in the course of this labour he made some alterations. For example; Psalm ii, ver. 1. Coverdale has it—"Why do the heathen grudge?" which Rogers has altered to—"Why do the heathen frown?" Rogers, therefore, having been the editor of Tyndale's and Coverdale's Bible, has given rise to the opinion that he had a share in the translation. In Mary's reign, after several hearings, he was condemned to be burnt, by the name of Rogers, *alias* Matthews, for the crime of printing the Bible in question. His martyrdom was distinguished by some of those memorable circumstances, which evinced genius as well as faith. On the morning which had been fixed for his execution, he was warned to prepare for death, before he rose. "If it be so, (said he,) I need not tie my points." During the whole of his confinement, Gardiner would never suffer him to see his wife or family. When he was fastened to the stake, a pardon was proffered him, if he would recant; and she was then permitted to come to him, with nine small children, and the tenth sucking at her breast. This nothing moved him. *He washed his hands in the flames*, and so died triumphantly, a blessed martyr.—*Abel Red.* 168.

I shall say nothing of the numerous editions and translations of the Scriptures, from the time of Henry VIII. ; but close this account by observing, that the Bible now read in our churches, was translated in the reign of James I. by an association of learned men from both universities, by the express direction of that prince*.

I have been thus copious in my account of the several versions of the Scriptures, not simply to exhibit a picture of the theological opinions and prejudices of this period, but because those versions did more, perhaps, to fix the language, than all other books put together. A similar effect was produced in Germany by the German translations. They have transmitted and perpetuated many ancient words, which probably would otherwise have become obsolete or unintelligible. It is justly remarked by Warton, that they contributed to enrich our native English, by importing and familiarising many Latin words ; particularly the Latin derivative substantives, such as—divination, perdition, adoption, manifestation, conso-

* A complete Catalogue of Bibles may be seen in Mr. Beloe's Anecdotes of Literature, recently published ; vol. 2, p. 312.

lation, contribution, administration, consummation, reconciliation, operation, communication, retribution, preparation, immortality, principality, &c. &c. And in other words, frustrate, inexcusable, transfigure, concupiscence, &c. &c. These words were obviously suggested by the Latin Vulgate; and at the time must have been incomprehensible by the bulk of the people, and even by many of the first classes. Hence it appears that Gardiner had little cause for his complaint, that the translation was too clear; and for his proposal, that instead of always using English phrases, many Latin terms should still be retained, from the hypocritical plea of their inherent significance and dignity.

But there were effects which resulted from the translation of the Bible still more important than the fixing the language, but to which *that* was necessarily precursive. Before the Scriptures were in the vulgar tongue, the ignorance of the lower classes was scarcely one remove above complete barbarism. They had now an opportunity of exercising their own judgments on the articles of their religious creed; and their frequent disputations on the meaning of different texts, their comments, and even

their quarrels about divine things—all operated as powerful stimulants to awaken their faculties from the deep slumber which had oppressed and degraded them. The humanizing influence, too, of Christianity, purified and exalted their affections, while its doctrines instructed them in their duties, and its sanctions urged to the practice of them. It were futile to object that the lower classes of religionists, and even those of more cultivated minds, blended the absurdest superstition, both with their theoretical and practical theology. This must necessarily be the case, till the instruments of thought are sufficiently sharpened and polished by use, to enable them to separate the true from the false. With the hope of eternal and inconceivable rewards on one hand, and the prospect of unimagined and ever-during torment on the other—tenets rendered operative by being brought home to the feelings by faith—their effect was great in proportion as their motives were powerful. Hence, among the early reformers, conscience was almost omnipotent: for, though to avoid being burnt alive, many of them recanted, yet the horrors of remorse, more terrible than devouring fire, caused many also to relapse into their

former *heresies*, and joyfully to embrace the flames in which they were consumed. The improvement of the public morals was the necessary consequence of this obedience to duty.

LATIMER,*Bishop of Worcester.*

LATIMER gained perhaps his greatest publicity under the following reign ; though even before the commencement of the present, he had become distinguished, and had reached his highest ecclesiastical dignity. He is properly found, therefore, at the close of this reign.

He was born at Thirkesson, or Thurcaston, in Leicestershire, about the year 1475. Being an only son, and of quick parts, his father, a respectable yeoman, resolved to make him a scholar. His early years were spent at home, and at the schools in the neighbourhood. At the age of fourteen, he entered at Christ's College, Cambridge ; and on taking his degree of master of arts, he entered into priest's orders. This was in the year 1500, when he began to act a conspicuous part on the theatre of the world.

He was a zealous papist till the age of thirty ; when, being converted to Lutheranism by Bilney, (who was also a priest, and afterwards burnt for heresy,) he began with great zeal to propagate the opinions of the reformers. His conversion took place in 1505 ; and about three years after, he was invited, through the interest of Dr. Butts, the king's physician, to court, which he soon quitted in disgust. He obtained, in 1529, the living of Westkinton, in Wiltshire ; and in 1534, was made chaplain to the queen, Anne Boleyn, at her own request, occasioned probably by the favorable representations of the lord Cromwell and Dr. Butts. In 1535, he was promoted by the king to the bishopric of Worcester.

On the passing of the act of the six bloody articles, Latimer's conscience recoiled at their savage spirit, and he resigned his bishopric. He could not refrain sometimes from expressing the abhorrence he felt ; for which an accusation was finally laid against him, and he was committed prisoner to the Tower, where he remained till the death of Henry. He was now released, and entered again on his ministerial function, but did not resume his episcopal dignity.

In 1548, he was one of the commissioners for trying and condemning Joan Bocher; which seems to verify the imputation, that our first reformers were no sooner freed from persecution, than they became persecutors.

During the reign of Edward VI. his zeal was pre-eminent among his zealous cotemporaries, to spread the reformation; and in conjunction with Cranmer, was one of the principal instruments in effecting its establishment. But in the persecutions of Mary, he was singled out as one of the most desired victims of popish vengeance. He might have made his escape, and the opportunity which was given him, seems to have been designed; but Latimer had the true spirit of a martyr; he refused, (and if such an epithet were applicable to a saint,) disdained to fly. On his reaching London, and passing through Smithfield, he remarked, that "Smithfield had long groaned for him." He was burnt for heresy at Oxford, on the 16th of October, 1555.

Latimer, a staff in his hand, a pair of spectacles hanging at his breast, and a Bible at his girdle, walked to his trial, and probably to the place of execution. When chained to the stake, he called out to his fellow martyr, Rid-

ley, bishop of London, "Be of good cheer, master Ridley, and play the man; we shall this day kindle such a torch in England, as I trust in God, shall never be extinguished." Two bags of gunpowder were fastened under his arms, the explosion of which instantaneously deprived him of life. At this moment a quantity of blood seemed to gush from his heart, as if all the blood in his body had been there collected. The unhappy Ridley was less fortunate. His extremities were consumed to the trunk, before the fire affected his vitals, and he died in lingering anguish.

The writings of Latimer consist chiefly of sermons, of which forty were first published in 1570. These were reprinted in 1572, and 1635, 4to. There are also some letters of his still extant, in Foxe's Acts and Monuments; the most remarkable and valuable of which is the famous one addressed to Henry VIII. for restoring the free liberty of reading the Scriptures. It is too long to be inserted entire, particularly as it will be proper to exhibit a specimen or two from his sermons; but I shall give the principal parts, and indeed the only parts of much value. This letter was written on occasion of the royal proclamation forbid-

ding the use of the Bible in English, with other books on religious subjects.

To the most mighty Prince, King of England, Henry the Eighth, grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, by our Lord Jesus Christ.

The holy doctor St. Augustine, in an epistle which he wrote to Casalanus, saith, that he which for fear of any power hideth the truth, provoketh the wrath of God to come upon him: for he feareth men more than God. And according to the same, the holy man St. John Chrysostome saith, that he is not only a traitor to the truth, which openly for truth teacheth a lie, but he also which doth not freely pronounce and shew the truth that he knoweth. These sentences, (most redoubted king,) when I read now of late, and marked them earnestly in the inward parts of mine heart, they made me sore afraid, troubled, and vexed me grievously in my conscience, and at the last drove me to this strait, that either I must shew forth such things as I have read and learned in Scripture, or else be of that sort that provoke the wrath of God upon them, and be traitors unto the truth: the which thing rather than it should happen, I had rather suffer extreme punishment.

For what other thing is it to be a traitor unto the

truth, than to be a traitor and a Judas unto Christ, which is the very truth and cause of all truth: the which saith, that whosoever denieth him here before men, he will deny him before his Father in Heaven. The which denying ought the more to be feared and dread, than the loss of all temporal goods, honour, promotion, fame, prison, slander, hurts, banishments, and all manner of torments and cruelties, yea, and death itself, be it never so shamefast and painful.

* * * * *

They have made it treason to your noble grace to have the Scripture in English. Here I beseech your grace to pardon me awhile, and patiently hear me a word or two: yea, though it be so that as concerning your high majesty and regal power, whereunto Almighty God hath called your grace, there is as great difference between you and me, as between God and man. For you be here to me and to all your subjects, in God's stead, to defend, aid, and succour us in our right, and so I should tremble and quake to speak to your grace. But again, as concerning that, you be a mortal man, in danger of sin, having in you the corrupt nature of Adam, in the which all we be both conceived and born: so have you no less need of the merits of Christ's passion for your salvation, than I and other of your subjects have, which be all members of the mystical body of Christ. And though you be an higher member, yet

you must not disdain the lesser. For as St. Paul saith, "Those members that be taken to be most vile, and had in least reputation, be as necessary as the other, for the preservation and keeping of the body." This, most gracious king, when I considered, and also your favourable and gentle nature, I was bold to write this rude, homely, and simple letter unto your grace, trusting that you will accept my true and faithful mind even as it is.

* * * * *

Your grace may see what means and craft the spirituality (as they will be called) imagine to break and withstand the acts which were made in your grace's last parliament against their superfluities. Wherefore they that thus do, your grace may know them not to be true followers of Christ. And altho' I named the spirituality to be corrupt with this unthrifty ambition; yet I mean not all to be faulty therein, for there be some good of them. Neither will I that your grace should take away the goods due to the church, but take away all evil persons from the goods, and set better in their stead.

* * * * *

"By their fruits you shall know them." For where you see persecution, there is the gospel, and there is the truth; and they that do persecute, be void and without all truth; not caring for the clear light, which (as our Saviour, Jesus Christ, saith in the third chapter of St. John's Gospel,) "is come into

the world, and which shall utter and shew forth every man's works." And they whose works be naught, dare not come to this light, but go about to stop it and hinder it, letting as much as they may, that the Holy Scripture should not be read in our mother tongue, saying that it would cause heresy and insurrection; and so they persuade, at the least way, they would fain persuade your grace to keep it back. But here mark their shameless boldness, which be not ashamed, contrary to Christ's doctrine, to gather figs of thorns, and grapes of bushes, and so call light darkness, and darkness light; sweet sour, and sour sweet; good evil, and evil good; and to say that that which teacheth all obedience, should cause dissention and strife: but such is their belly-wisdom wherewith they judge and measure every thing to hold and keep still this wicked mammon, the goods of this world, which is their God; and hath so blinded the eyes of their hearts, that they cannot see the clear light of the sacred Scripture, though they babble never so much of it.

But as concerning this matter, other men have shewed your grace their minds, how necessary it is to have the Scripture in English. The which thing also your grace hath promised by your last proclamation: the which promise, I pray God that your gracious highness may shortly perform, even to-day, before to-morrow. Nor let the wickedness of these

worldly men detain you from your godly purpose and promise.

* * * * *

Seeing that the right David, that is to say, our Saviour Christ, hath sent his servants, that is to say, his true preachers, and his own word also to comfort our weak and sick souls, let not these worldly men make your grace believe that they will cause insurrections and heresies, and such mischiefs as they imagine of their own mad brains, lest that he be avenged upon you and your realm, as was David upon the Ammonites, and as he hath ever been avenged upon them which have obstinately withstood and gain-said his word. But, peradventure, they will lay this against me, and say that experience doth shew how that such men as call themselves followers of the Gospel, regard not your grace's commandment, neither set by your proclamation; and that was well proved by these persons which of late were punished in London for keeping such books as your grace had prohibited by proclamation: and so like as they regarded not this, so they will not regard or esteem other your grace's laws, statutes, or ordinances. But this is but a crafty persuasion. For your grace knoweth that there is no man living, specially that loveth worldly promotion, that is so foolish to set forth, promote, or enhance his enemy, whereby he should be let of his wordly pleasures and

fleshly desires: but rather he will seek all the ways possible that he can, utterly to confound, destroy, and put him out of the way. And so as concerning your last proclamation prohibiting such books, the very true cause of it, and chief counsellors, (as men say, and of likelihood it should be,) were they whose evil living and cloaked hypocrisy, these books uttered and disclosed. And howbeit that there were three or four that would have had the Scripture to go forth in English; yet it happened there, as it is evermore seen, that the most part overcometh the better; and so it might be that these men did not take this proclamation as yours, but as theirs, set forth in your name, and they have done many times *mo*, which hath put this your realm in great hindrance and trouble, and brought it in great penury, and more would have done, if God had not mercifully provided, to bring your grace to knowledge of the falsehood of the privy treason, which their head and captain was about; and be ye sure, not without adherents, if the matter be duly searched. For what marvel is it, that they being so nigh of your counsel, and so familiar with your lords, should provoke both your grace and them to prohibit these books, which before, by their own authority, have forbidden the New Testament, under pain of everlasting damnation: for such is their manner, to send a thousand men to hell, ere they send one to God; and yet the

New Testament (and so I think by the other,) was meekly offered to every man that would and could, to amend it if there were any fault.

Moreover, I will ask them the causes of all insurrections which have been in this realm heretofore? And whence is it that there be so many extortioners, bribers, murderers, and thieves, which daily do not break only your grace's laws, ordinances, and statutes, but also the laws and commandments of Almighty God? I think they will not say these books, but rather their pardons, which causeth many a man to sin in trust of them. For as for those malefactors which I now rehearsed, you shall not find one amongst a hundred, but that he will cry out of both of these books, and also of them that have them, yea, and will be glad to spend the goods which he hath wrongfully gotten, upon faggots, to burn both the books and them that have them.

And as touching these men that were lately punished for these books, there is no man, I hear say, that can lay any word or deed against them that should sound to the breaking of any of your grace's laws, this only except, if it be yours, and not rather theirs. And be it so that there be some that have these books, that be evil, unruly, and self-willed persons, not regarding God's laws, nor man's; yet these books be not the cause thereof, no more than was the bodily presence of Christ and his words, the

cause that Judas fell, but their own froward mind and carnal wit, which should be amended by the virtuous example of living of their curates, and by the true exposition of the Scripture. If the lay people had such curates that would thus do their office, neither these books, nor the devil himself could hurt them, nor make them go out of frame; so that the lack of good curates is the destruction and cause of all mischief. Neither do I write these things because that I will either excuse these men lately punished, or to affirm all to be true written in their books, which I have not all read; but to shew that there cannot such inconvenience follow of them, and specially of the Scripture, as they would make them believe should follow.

* * * * *

Take heed whose counsels your grace doth follow in this matter: for there be some that for fear of losing of their worldly worship and honour, will not leave off their opinion, which rashly, and that to please men withal, by whom they had great promotion, they took upon them to defend by writing. So that now they think that all their felicity which they put in this life, should be marred, and their wisdom not so greatly regarded, if that which they have so slanderously oppressed should be now put forth and allowed.

* * * * *

I pray to God that your grace —— may be found a faithful minister of his gifts, and not a defender of his faith, for he will not have it defended by man, or man's power, but by his word only, by the which he hath evermore defended it, and that by a way far above man's power or reason, as all the stories of the Bible make mention.

Wherefore, gracious king, remember yourself, have pity upon your soul, and think that the day is even at hand, when you shall give accounts of your office, and of the blood that hath been shed with your sword. In the which day, that your grace may stand stedfastly, and not be ashamed, but be clear and ready in your reckoning, and to have (as they say,) your *quietus est*, sealed with the blood of our Saviour Christ, which only serveth at that day, is my daily prayer to Him that suffered death for our sins, which also prayeth to his Father for grace for us continually. To whom be all honour and praise for ever, Amen. The Spirit of God preserve your grace.

Anno Domini, 1530, 1 die Decembris.

This admirable letter, from the intrigues of the popish faction, failed (as is well known) to produce the desired effect; but Henry, in spite of his vices, had a disposition too ingenuous not to be affected with the simple and

impressive manner of Latimer—with his sincerity and honest zeal.

His sermons are many of them very curious compositions, and a few extracts from them can scarcely fail to amuse, if not to instruct every description of readers. The following passage is remarkable, as it relates to his personal history, and exhibits a correct picture of the ancient yeomanry:

My father was a yeoman, and had no lands of his own, only he had a farm of 3l. or 4l. by year at the uttermost, and hereupon he tilled so much as kept half a dozen men. He had walk for an hundred sheep, and my mother milked 30 kine. He was able, and did find the king a harness, with himself and his horse, while he came to the place that he should receive the king's wages. I can remember that I buckled his harness when he went to Blackheath field. He kept me to school, or else I had not been able to have preached before the king's majesty now. He married my sisters with 5l. or 20 nobles a-piece, so that he brought them up in godliness and fear of God. He kept hospitality for his

poor neighbours. And some alms he gave to the poor, and all this did he of the said farm. Where he that now hath it, payeth 16l. by the year, or more, and is not able to do any thing for his prince, for himself, nor for his children, or give a cup of drink to the poor.

In my time my poor father was as diligent to teach me to shoot, as to learn me any other thing, and so I think other men did their children: he taught me how to draw, how to lay my body in my bow, and not to draw with strength of arms as divers other nations do, but with strength of the body. I had my bows bought me according to my age and strength; as I increased in them, so my bows were made bigger and bigger, for men shall never shoot well; except they be brought up in it: it is a worthy game, a wholesome kind of exercise, and much commended in physic.

He then gives an account of an insidious examination he underwent before the bishops:

I was once in examination before five or six bishops, where I had much turmoiling; every week thrice I came to examination, and many snares and traps were laid to get something. Now God knoweth,

I was ignorant of the law, but that God gave me answer and wisdom what I should speak. It was God indeed, for else I had never escaped them. At the last I was brought forth to be examined, into a chamber hanged with arras, where I was wont to be examined, but now at this time the chamber was somewhat altered. For whereas before there was wont ever to be a fire in the chimney, now the fire was taken away, and an arras hanging hanged over the chimney, and the table stood near the chimney's end: so that I stood between the table and the chimney's end. There was among these bishops that examined me, one with whom I have been very familiär, and took him for my great friend, an aged man, and he sate next the table's end.

Then among all other questions he put forth one, a very subtle and crafty one, and such a one indeed as I could not think so great danger in. And I should make answer: I pray you, master Latimer, saith he, speak out: I am very thick of hearing, and here be many that sit far off. I marvelled at this, that I was bidden speak out, and began to misdeem, and gave an ear to the chimney. And, sir, there I heard a pen walking in the chimney behind the cloth. They had appointed one there to write all my answers, for they made sure work that I should not start from them, there was no starting from them.

God was my good Lord, and gave me answer; I could never else have escaped it. The question was this: Master Latimer, do you not think on your conscience, that you have been suspected of heresy? A subtle question, a very subtle question. There was no holding of peace would serve. To hold my peace had been to grant myself faulty. To answer it was every way full of danger. But God, which alway had given me answer, helped me, or else I could never have escaped it, and delivered me from their hands.



The next is a very amusing example of his peculiar manner.

We be many preachers here in England, and we preach many long sermons, yet the people will not repent nor convert. This was the fruit, the effect, and the good, that his (Jonas's) sermon did, that all the whole city at his preaching converted, and amended their evil loose living, and did penance in sackcloth. And yet here in this sermon of Jonas is no great curiousness, no great clerkliness, no great affectation of words, nor painted eloquence: it was none other but, *adhuc quadraginta dies et Nineve subvertetur*: Yet forty days, Nineve *subvertetur*, and Nineve shall be destroyed; it was no more. This

was no great curious sermon, but this was a nipping sermon, a pinching sermon, a biting sermon; it had a full bite, it was a nipping sermon, a rough sermon, and a sharp biting sermon. Do you not here marvel that these Ninevites cast not *Jonas* in prison, that they did not revile him, nor rebuke him? They did not revile him nor rebuke him. But God gave them grace to hear him, and to convert and amend at his preaching. A strange matter, so noble a city, to give place to one man's sermon. Now, England cannot abide this *gear*¹, they cannot be content to hear God's minister, and his threatening for their sins, though the sermon be never so good, though it be never so true. It is a naughty fellow, a seditious fellow; he maketh trouble and rebellion in the realm, he lacketh discretion. * * * * *

Here is now an argument to prove the matter against the preachers. Here was preaching against covetousness all the last year in Lent, and the next summer followed rebellion: *Ergo* preaching against covetousness was the cause of the rebellion—a goodly argument. Here now I remember an argument of master Moore's, which he bringeth in a book that he made against Bilney; and here by the way I will tell you a merry toy. Master Moore was once sent in commission into Kent, to help to try out (if it might be) what was the cause of Goodwin

¹ stuff, matter.

Sands, and the shelf that stopped up Sandwich haven. Thither cometh master Moore, and calleth the country afore him, such as were thought to be men of experience, and men that could of likelihood best certify him of that matter concerning the stopping of Sandwich haven. Among others came in before him an old man, with a white head, and one that was thought to be little less than a hundred years old. When master Moore saw this aged man, he thought it expedient to hear him say his mind in this matter (for being so old a man, it was likely that he knew most of any man in that presence and company). So master Moore called this old aged man unto him, and said; Father, (said he,) tell me if you can, what is the cause of this great arising of the sands and shelves here about this haven, the which stop it up, that no ships can arrive here? Ye are the eldest man I can espy in all this company, so that if any man can tell any cause of it, ye of likelihood can say most to it, or at leastwise, more than any man here assembled. Yea forsooth, good master, (quoth this old man,) for I am well nigh a hundred years old, and no man here in this company any thing near unto mine age. Well then, (quoth master Moore,) how say you in this matter? What think you to be the cause of these shelves and flats that stop up Sandwich haven? Forsooth sir, (quoth he,) I am an old man; I think that Tenterton-steeple

is the cause of Goodwin Sands. For I am an old man, sir, (quoth he,) and I may remember the building of Tenterton-steeple, and I may remember when there was no steeple at all there. And before that Tenterton-steeple was in building, there was no manner of speaking of any flats or sands that stopped the haven; and therefore I think that Tenterton-steeple is the cause of the destroying and decay of Sandwich haven. And so to my purpose, is preaching of God's word the cause of rebellion, as Tenterton-steeple was cause that Sandwich haven is decayed.

In another sermon he addresses the ladies in a manner perhaps not over-gallant, and declaims against the vices of the age in general.

As it is a part of your penance, ye women, to travail in bearing your children: for it is a part of your penance to be subject unto your husbands; ye are underlings, and must be obedient. But this is now made a trifle and a small matter. And yet it is a sad matter; a godly matter, a ghostly matter, and matter of damnation and salvation. And Paul saith that a woman ought to have a power on her head. What is this to have a power on her head? It is a manner of speaking of the Scripture; and to

have a power on her head, is to have a sign and token of power, which is by covering of her head, declaring that she hath a superior above her, by whom she ought to be ruled and ordered. For she is not immediately under God, but mediately. For by this injunction, their husband is their head under God, and they subjects to their husbands. But this power that some of them have, is disguised *gear* and strange fashions. They must wear French hoods, and I cannot tell you what to call it. And when they make them ready, and come to the covering of their head, they will call and say, give me my French hood, and give me my bonnet, or my cap, and so forth. I would wish that the women would call the covering of their heads by the terms of the Scriptures. As when she would have her cap, I would she should say, Give me my power. I would they would learn to speak, as the Holy Ghost speaketh, and call it but such a name as St. Paul doth. I would they would, (as they have much preaching) when they put on their cap, I would they would have this meditation: I am now putting on my power upon my head. If they had this thought in their minds, they would not make so much pranking up of themselves as they do now a-days. But now here is a vengeance devil: we must have one power from Turkey of velvet, and gay it must be—far fet, dear bought; and when it cometh it is a false sign. I had rather have a true English sign, than

a false sign from Turkey. It is a false sign when it converteth not their heads as it should do. For if they would keep it under the power as they ought to do, there should not any such thussockes nor tufts be seen as there be, nor such laying out of the hair, nor braiding to have it open. I would marvel of it, how it should come to be so abused, and so far out of order, saving that I know by experience, that many would be ruled by their husbands, as they ought to be. I have been desired to exhort some, and with some I could do little in that matter. But there be now many *Adams* that will not displease their wives, but will in this behalf let them have all their own minds, and do as them listeth. And some others again there be now a-days that will defend it, and say it may be suffered well enough, because it is not expressed in Scripture, nor spoken of by name. Though we have not express mention in Scripture against such laying out of the hair in thussockes and tufts, yet we have in Scripture express mention *de tortis crinibus*, of writhen hair, that is *for the nonce*¹ forced to curl. But of these *thussockes* that are laid out now a-days, there is no mention made in Scriptures, because they were not used in Scripture time. They were not yet come to be so far out of order, as to lay out such thussockes and tufts. But I will tell thee, if thou wilt needs lay it out, or if

¹ *for the nonce*—on purpose ; *per force*. This expression is still used in Norfolk in the same sense.

thou wilt needs shew thy hair, and have it seen, go and poll thy head, or round it, as men do : for to what purpose is it to pull it out so, and to lay it out? Some do it (say they) of a simplicity. Some do it of a pride. And some of other causes. But they do it because they will be quarter-master with their husbands. Quarter-master? Nay, half-masters : yea, some of them will be whole-masters, and rule the roast as they list themselves. But these defenders of it will not have it evil, because it is not spoken of in Scripture. But there be other things as evil as this, which are not spoken of in Scripture expressly, but they are implied in Scripture, as well as though they were expressly spoken of. For the prophet Esay saith, *Væ qui consurgitis mane ad comessandum, ad ebrietatem sectandam, et potando usque ad vesperum, ut vino æstuetis.* Wo unto you that rise early in the morning and go to drinking until night, that ye might swim in wine.

This is the Scripture against banquetting and drunkenness. But now they banquet all night, and lie a-bed in the day time till noon, and the Scripture speaketh nothing of that. But what then? The devil hath his purpose this way, as well as the other ; he hath his purpose as well by revelling and keeping ill rule all night, as by rising early in the morning and banquetting all day. So the devil hath his purpose both ways. Ye noble men, ye great men, I wot not what rule ye keep : for God's

sake hear the complaints and suits of the poor. Many complain against you, that ye lie a-bed till eight, or nine, or ten of the clock. I cannot tell what revel ye have over night, whether in banquetting, or dicing, or carding, or how it is. But in the morning, when the poor suitors come to your houses, ye cannot be spoken withal, they are kept sometimes without your gates, or if they be let into the hall or some outer chamber, out cometh one or other, Sir, ye cannot speak with my lord yet, my lord is asleep, or he hath business of the king's all night, &c. and thus poor suitors are driven off from day to day, that they cannot speak with you in three or four days, yea, a whole month—what shall I say more? A whole year sometimes ere they can come to your speech, to be heard of you. For God's love, look better to it; speak with poor men when they come to your houses, and dispatch poor suitors, as indeed some noblemen do, and would Christ that all noblemen would so do.

Afterwards, adverting to the nativity, he says :

I warrant you there was many a jolly damsel at that time in *Bethlem*, yet amongst them all there was not one found that would humble herself so

much, as once to go see poor Mary in the stable, and to comfort her. No, no ; they were too fine to take such pains. I warrant you they had their bracelets, and verdingals, and were trimmed with all manner of fine and costly raiment, like as there be many now a-days amongst us, which study nothing else but how they may devise fine raiment, and in the mean season, they suffer poor Mary to lie in the stable ; that is to say, the poor people of God they suffer to perish for lack of necessities.

But what was her swaddling clothes wherein she laid the King of Heaven and Earth ? No doubt it was poor *gear* ; peradventure it was her kercher which she took from her head, or such like *gear* : for I think Mary had not much fine linen ; she was not trimmed up as our women be now a-days. I think indeed Mary had never a verdingal, for she used no such superfluities as our fine damsels do now a-days : for in the old time women were content with honest and simple garments. Now they have found out these roundabouts ; they were not invented then ; the devil was not so cunning to make such *gear* ; he found it out afterward. Therefore Mary had it not. I will say this, and yet not judge other folks' hearts, but only speak after daily appearance and experience : no doubt it is nothing but a token of pride to wear such verdingals, and therefore I think that every godly woman should set

them aside. It was not for nought that St. Paul advertised all women to give a good example of sadness, soberness, and godliness, in setting aside all wantonness and pride. And he speaketh of such manner of pride as was used in his time: *non tortis crinibus*, not with laying out the hair artificially: *non plicatura capillorum*, not with laying out the tussockes. I doubt not but if verdingals had been used at that time, St. Paul would have spoken against them too, like as he spake against other things which women used at that time, to shew their wantonness and foolishness. Therefore, as I said before, seeing that God abhorreth all pride (and verdingals are nothing else but an instrument of pride) I would wish that women would follow the counsel of St. Paul, and set aside such gorgeous apparel, and rather study to please God, than to set their mind upon pride: or else, when they will not follow the counsel of St. Paul, let them scrape out those words wherewith he forbiddeth them their proudness, otherwise the words of St. Paul will condemn them at the last day. I say no more; wise folks will do wisely. The words of St. Paul are not written for nothing: if they will do after his mind, they must set aside their foolish verdingals: but if they will go forward in their 'foolishness and pride, the reward which they shall have at the end, shall not be taken from them.

By this plain, familiar, often coarse style of preaching, Latimer produced a wonderful effect upon his hearers. On one or two occasions he preached with applause, even before Henry VIII. himself, at Windsor. In his time there were no sermons, except in the principal churches, and upon some particular fasts and festivals. In the reign of Edward VI. he preached often at court; and his sermons, both from the novelty of the thing, and the reputation of the preacher, drew crowds of all descriptions to hear him. We are informed by Heylin, that the multitude was so great, as to occasion the removal of the pulpit from the Royal Chapel to the Privy Garden.

Cranmer conspired with his brother martyr, Latimer, to introduce a more rational and plain manner of preaching*. The sermons of both, particularly those of Latimer, were eminently popular; and insisted much on moral

* As I have given such copious extracts from the Works of Latimer, I shall be excused for passing over those of Cranmer, though they are very numerous, and abound in theological learning. His library contained a very noble collection of books; and Roger Ascham has often said, "I meet with authors here, which the two universities cannot furnish."

topics, and the duties of philanthropy. This method was wholly different from the customary preaching of those times, which consisted for the most part, in telling legendary tales of saints and martyrs, always incredible, and commonly ridiculous and contemptible; and in giving reports of miracles wrought for the confirmation of transubstantiation, and other superstitious doctrines of the Catholic church. We are indebted to Latimer and Cranmer, therefore, in addition to their laudable struggles against the tyranny of the Popish hierarchy, for contributing to restore the dominion of common sense.

END OF VOL. I.

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